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1. The first part of the book is a general introduction to the study of the history of the United States. It discusses the importance of the study of history and the methods used by historians to reconstruct the past. It also discusses the role of the historian in society and the importance of the study of history in the education of the young.



"SUCH A DAUGHTER!"

THE
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JANUARY, 1881.

A Grape from a Thorn.

BY JAMES PAYN,

AUTHOR OF "BY PROXY" AND "HIGH SPIRITS."

CHAPTER I.

ON THE ROAD.



ARE not four horses a little expensive, papa?"

This modest observation, in the French tongue, and expressed in a tone so gentle that it could hardly be called remonstrant, was made by a young lady of eighteen as she sat in a hired barouche in the High Street of Lawton, and in front of the "Angel in Boots," from which establishment (to the admiration of its proprietor) a supplementary pair of posters had just been ordered. It was unusual in that part of the country

to travel with a postilion; so that two of them, with horses to match, awakened in the population of the little town what the poet calls "the hushed amaze of hand and eye;" they also opened their mouths exceed-

ingly wide, and encircled the vehicle containing Mr. Josceline and his daughter to catch any crumb of information respecting those distinguished strangers, much like expectant goldfish. There had been no such excitement in the place since the travelling circus had pitched its tent there in the autumn of last year, and it was now mid-June.

It is possible that these good people, even if the horses and the "turn-out" had not been their chief attraction, might have failed to seize the more subtle shades of character in the two passengers thus offered to their observation; but one of them at least, had they been more skilful students of human nature, would have been well worth their study. The Hon. George Emilius Josceline was a gentleman whose aristocratic appearance and repose of manner showed to the utmost advantage in an open barouche. The afternoon was not very far advanced, yet an ample fur cloak was carelessly arranged about him, and the travelling cap which surmounted his already silvering head was drawn down to his ears. He was but forty-five, but had accomplished his life's journey at so quick a rate that he had considerably damaged his constitution, and had grown old before his time. This circumstance, however, gave a delicacy to his appearance that by no means detracted from its interesting character; his faded colour and wasted features looked very appropriate in the barouche and four, though if his legs had been visible, and one could have disengaged one's attention from the violet stockings and patent-leather shoes in which they terminated, you might (in ignorance of his rank) have called him spindle-shanked. He had a calm, exhausted smile which (as though he had been a prince of the blood who had passed his life in acknowledging the plaudits of the populace) suggested the ravages of affability.

His daughter, Ella, was not unlike him as to feature, and her complexion was perhaps somewhat too delicate to be associated with robust health, but there was no trace in it of illness or languor. Her face was "pale and thinner than should be for one so young," but this did not arise from physical causes. She had what persons, in very different circles from those in which Mr. George Emilius Josceline was accustomed to move, are wont to term "enough to think about;" her father was the only relative she had in the world, and her friends were comprised within the four walls of a school at Clapham, from which she had but lately emerged to join Mr. Josceline on the Continent, where he had been living a nomad life (though by no means in tents) for many years. She knew little of his past, or of her own so far as it related to him; she had seen him, previous to the last six months, for only a few hours at a time, when he had called at Minerva Lodge to make inquiries about her of the school-mistress, and to express his regret to her—which he did with graceful tenderness—that for the present, and until she should grow up, he had no home to offer her: and of her future she knew still less. Absolutely nothing, indeed, except that it must needs be but sparsely provided for. She had gathered from observation—for no definite statement on the

matter had ever been made to her—that her father was living at least up to his income; but this was a subject on which she had had no encouragement to speak. The first time, indeed, that she had ever hinted at it was on the present occasion; and even then, with the utmost delicacy, and in the French tongue, in which, when they were alone together, Mr. Josceline (who had a curious repugnance to England and the English) preferred to converse.

“Are not four horses, papa, a little expensive?”

Mr. Josceline’s smile expanded into a genial ray, and his calm grey eyes twinkled with subdued humour, as he replied, “That is quite true, Ella; you are thinking that twice two are four. I am glad to find that Miss Steele included arithmetic in her curriculum of education, though the Parisian accent was an extra. You are improving, however, even in that, my dear, though, as it happens, a little late. It is not likely that any one at Wallington Bay will be critical on that point.”

Ella did not speak; a little colour stole into her cheek and a dew into her large brown eyes, for she felt that a reproof had been administered to her. She ought to have known better than to have interfered with her father’s arrangements, for which, to do him justice, he had generally some sufficient reason. Whatever had been the motive for his thus travelling *en prince*, it certainly did not arise from ostentation. “Display,” she had often heard him say, was “incompatible with comfort,” and to be comfortable was his simple aim. But then Mr. George Emilius Josceline’s notions of comfort were closely allied to other people’s ideas of luxury.

The four horses started amid a feeble cheer from the crowd, and speedily carried them out of the quaint little town; the road was a very picturesque one, changing abruptly from open moorland to well-wooded lanes, where the trees in their early green made triumphal archways for their passage, and then again to rolling downland, with ever and anon a glimpse of the sea. They were traversing the fairest portion of the fairest county in the south of England, and the varied beauties of the landscape touched the sensitive young girl to the core. She knew not what it was that ailed her, for she had never experienced such sensations before. She had known London, and Paris, and of course had beheld the country that lies between them; but that was on a hurried railway journey, and even the English part of it was no match for the scenes that now surrounded her, enjoyed at ease and to the full. Every pastoral farm, every honeysuckled cottage by the brookside, looked to her as though she could have taken up her abode in them, and dwelt there happy for evermore. Under the softening influences of so much beauty, she soon forgot her late rebuff, and, with that yearning for sympathy which belongs to youth, once more addressed herself to her companion.

“I was quite unprepared for the loveliness of this drive, papa; I never saw anything like it. Is there anything like it out of England?”

“I don’t know that there is, my dear,” returned Mr. Josceline, with a

slight yawn. "There are twenty times finer views, however, in Italy and Switzerland."

"But not in France, surely? Those straight level roads with the Noah's ark-like trees on each side of them I thought very wearisome."

"You reason from insufficient data, my dear child. You fell into the same error when you made that remark about the horses."

Ella bit her lip; she felt that she would rather have bitten her tongue off than have made that unhappy observation.

"I am very sorry, dear papa; I did not mean to annoy you."

"Nor have you annoyed me, my darling; on the whole, indeed, I am rather glad you said what you did. It gives me an opportunity of explaining myself on a matter which there is always a certain difficulty in approaching—— Dear me, are those deer in that park yonder?"

Mr. Josceline put up his eyeglasses, and gazed with some interest at a distant glade, where, under huge oaks, a herd of deer were standing deep in fern.

"Yes, papa; and what a quantity of them!"

"What house is that yonder, postilion; and to whom does it belong?" inquired Mr. Josceline.

"It is Barton Castle, sir; Sir Everard Drake's," returned the man, turning round in his saddle. "Sir Everard himself don't live there."

"Quite right; it must be very dull," mused the other, half to himself. "Somebody lives there, however, I suppose; I see smoke from the chimney."

"Oh, yes, sir, a party has taken it; but nobody sees nothing of him. He's a Miss—a Miss——; but there, I forget what they call him."

"But if it's a Miss it must be a lady, my good fellow."

"But it ain't, sir; it's a gentleman. He's very good to the poor, and the beer in the servants' hall is as good as any in the county; but he don't go out nowhere, and shuts himself up—it's a Mr. Charles Edwards."

"He means a Misanthrope, papa," said Ella, laughing.

"Ah! that's the name, miss, because I heard the parson talking about him, and his never coming to church like a Christian."

If going to church was the test of Christianity, Mr. Josceline himself was out of the fold; and perhaps the chance shot of the postilion hit his conscience, for he suddenly became very grave and silent. Yet he was not a man whose conscience was often hit, or, when hit, much hurt. He kept it in subjection under him as a wise man keeps his stomach.

"And what makes this Mr. Edwards a misanthrope?" continued Ella, not perceiving the alteration in her father's manner, and not a little amused by that of the postilion.

"Well, miss, I don't understand the rights of it, not I; but they do say as Mr. Edwards is a Dook in disguise."

"How far is Barton Castle from Wallington Bay?" inquired Mr. Josceline, sharply.

"Well, a matter of five miles and more, sir; and a deal further, as you may see for yourself, from the Bay to the Castle."

He pointed with his whip down the road, which was a continuous descent, so that in time, at least, if not in distance, their position in respect to one another was, in fact, as the man had described.

"I see," said Mr. Josceline, with a stately inclination of his head to signify the conclusion of his inquiries; "the road is steep, keep your eye on your horses."

"What could the man mean, papa," inquired Ella, "by saying that the gentleman who lives yonder is a duke in disguise?"

"Heaven knows; in England everybody's head runs on dukes." Yet, despite his indifference, Mr. Josceline continued to regard Barton Castle with some attention; and, even when they had passed by it, he turned round more than once to look at its main tower, which showed with its flagstaff above the surrounding trees.

"When Mr. Edwards is there they puts the flag up," explained the man, whose tongue, once set agoing on so favourite a topic, it was not easy to stop; "when he isn't they doesn't—just like the Queen at Windsor."

Even to this Ella perceived her father paid some attention, though it was very unusual for him, she knew, to take interest in local gossip. That the incident had been sufficient to divert him from his proposed "explanation" did not, however, surprise her. He not only always found "a difficulty," as he expressed it, in approaching any matter of business, but especially any topic of a serious nature that had reference to themselves; and, even when commenced, he would seize upon the slightest pretext to fly from it. Ella knew her father thoroughly as respected his likes and dislikes, his habits and "ways," though, as we have said, she was in almost complete ignorance of his position in the world. She understood that he was a man of rank who had fallen out with his relatives, who held no communication with him, but how the estrangement had taken place she did not understand. She also knew that she was an only child, and that her mother had died when she was very young; beyond these facts her schoolmistress, Miss Steele, had told her nothing, and there was that in her father's manner which prevented her making further inquiries. She loved him dearly, and would have done so had he been even less kind and indulgent; but her filial affection for him—from the absence of all confidence on his part—was incomplete.

The road now dipped between two hills which, opening before them like giant gates, disclosed a glorious view—a landlocked bay, the blue waters of which contrasted most charmingly with steep cliffs of red sandstone. In a picture such diversity of colour would have seemed unnatural; but the cunning artist, Nature, who sets at naught "the falsehood of extremes," had so wrought it that the scene seemed like a prevision of Paradise itself.

"How very, very lovely!" exclaimed Ella, in a transport of subdued delight. "Oh, papa, how glad I am you thought of coming to Wallington Bay!"

"With regard to the four horses," observed Mr. Josceline, gravely, whose eyes were fixed on the fur cloak before him, and did not extend their patronage to the landscape notwithstanding Ella's eulogy of it, "they are, as you say, rather expensive, but, looked at from a proper point of view, they will appear anything but extravagant. At a place like the *Ultramarine*, an hotel used mainly by the rich middle classes, the extra pair will, in the eyes of its inmates, more than double, I will not say our income—for that would be far from having an imposing effect—but our supposed income."

"But, dear papa," pleaded the girl, softly, "is not that a species of deception?"

"Our leaders will be *mis*leaders, my dear, to those who choose to be guided by them, of course; but that will not be our fault. It is a very cheap method, at all events, of establishing ourselves at once at the top of the tree—the best position, that is, for looking about us and deciding upon the most eligible spot"—he was about to say—"to roost;" but an expression in his daughter's face of anxiety, if not alarm, caused him to alter the expression to "perch"—a word, moreover, he pronounced in a light and airy tone suggestive of the action.

Nor even then did it seem to him that he had done enough to remove a certain impression of seriousness of aim which the speech had involuntarily conveyed, since, for the rest of the way, he exerted himself to amuse and interest his companion as though she had been a person of consequence in no way related to him. He was a master of the conversational art; but it took all he knew to effect his object, and it was with no slight sense of relief that he at last perceived the goal of their journey.

"Yonder is the inn!" he exclaimed; "a handsome house enough, one must allow, and standing in quite a little park of its own; but, for all that, I have a presentiment that the cooking will play the deuce with my digestion, and that we shall be poisoned with bad wine."

CHAPTER II.

THE ARRIVAL.

MR. JOSCELINE'S eulogium upon the inn at Wallington Bay was not undeserved. It was a large rambling building of very ancient date, but which had been added to at various epochs. It had once been the Prior's house, attached to the abbey (the ruins of which still stood in the grounds); and, when the latter had been destroyed by bluff King Hal's commissioner sent down to investigate into the alleged malpractices of its tenants, he had spared the dwelling-house as being unconnected with any spiritual

shortcomings, and also because it was exceedingly comfortable and convenient, and obtained a grant of it for himself. There he had lived till judgment had overtaken him, which had also, with fine nose, pursued every subsequent inhabitant. None who took the Prior's house had prospered, though the last tenant had done his best to wash away the stains that clung to it by turning it into a hydropathic establishment. His ruin had been more complete, if less picturesque, than that of the abbey itself. Curiously enough the house, built of red sandstone, and fairly glowing against its background of short, thick-stemmed trees, their branches all blown about by the all-prevailing wind, stood stoutly as ever. The stately pile seemed as little fitted for an inn as might be; but there was no choice for the proprietor (after its hydropathic stage) between that and a madhouse, and an inn, therefore, it had become. Mrs. Trant, the landlady, had been greatly puzzled for a proper name for it, and had consulted Mr. Michael Felspar, the artist (who had made Wallington Bay his own by reason of the many pictures he had painted of it), on this important subject.

"I am advised to call it the *Marine Hotel*; but it looks something quite beyond that, now don't it, sir?"

"Of course it does. Why not call it the *Ultramarine*?" And as she saw no objection, nor yet the joke, the *Ultramarine* it was called accordingly.

What was very singular—and this may prove of the utmost benefit to the proprietors of great houses suffering under theological and hereditary curses—was, that the hotel was succeeding; no doubt from the circumstance of its being in the hands of a company. There being such a lot of them, the ban probably did not know where to settle, and, thoroughly disgusted, took itself off altogether. On the other hand, some credit must be due to Mrs. Trant's management of the establishment. It was one of the few inns in England where the salad oil could be depended upon, and the sheets tucked up at the foot of the beds. And then the situation was absolutely unrivalled; perhaps it would be better to add, and indescribable; for I have observed this of descriptions of places, even by master-hands like that of Walter Scott, that when one has read and apparently understood them in every detail, and one afterwards visits the place described, it is utterly and entirely different from what one has been led to expect. On the other hand, if you are already acquainted with the spot, you recognise the description readily. At the date of which I speak (though there is now, alas! a change in that respect), the world at large knew nothing of Wallington Bay; one of the things that made its situation "unrivalled" was that it was twenty miles from the nearest railway, and therefore very difficult of approach—an inconvenience which greatly added to its charm in the opinion of those who, from the hotel point of view, were most worth knowing. For the aristocracy, indeed, it was too dull; but for the wealthy middle class, who were diligently learning to be exclusive, and also to profess to admire

the beauties of nature, it had great attractions. With them Wallington Bay had already achieved such a reputation that it was known among them familiarly as "the Bay"—just as the old Duke of Wellington was called "the Duke"—as though there was but one bay in the world.

A little cove that thought itself a bey,

Felspar had once termed it; but this flight of Eastern imagery was due to his picture of the abbey having been "skied" in the Academy, which made his humour a little tart that year. It was in truth a glorious bay, with twenty feet of water up to the very beach, and a little island in the middle of it, with a cavern even yet in the occasional occupation of sea-nymphs; for in front of it was a sloping sand that shone at low water in the sun like diamond dust, and here the young ladies of the hotel, conveyed by trusty boatmen, would bathe in calm weather, concealed from sight (save of the Tritons) by a wooded cliff.

Eastward and westward one might walk for miles along the cliff top, or stray down by zig-zag paths into creek and cove, each known to local fame for quaint-shaped rock or wave-worn hollow. On the first promontory on the western side stood the coastguard station, white as a star, a very castle of indolence as it seemed to those who visited it in calm weather, and beheld its inmates pacing their chalk-marked path, or stretched at full length on the sunny sward, sweeping the sea with their glasses; but when the ocean rose in wrath, and the little storm-bell on the boathouse below began to swing in sign of danger to the mariner, to see the coastguard men race down the cliff, and take their allotted stations in the galley, was a sight to quicken your own pulses, aye, and if you chanced to have one, to bring your heart into your mouth, in sympathy with such self-sacrifice and courage. On the opposite promontory was another sort of station belonging to another epoch. There the Danes, having landed some thousand years ago or so, and found the place to their liking, had dug great trenches and made a camp for themselves—and for the delight of archæologists. No more its sentries looked to northward for the native foe, nor to southward and to sea for their kinsmen; no more their raven flapped its wing upon the wind-swept summit. Peace reigned on the Danecliff now, its wildest visitant the white-winged gull; and all the summer long the grass-grown ramparts were alive with butterfly and bee, and sweet with thyme, and in the autumn crowned with purple heath.

Wallington Village, though not, I suppose, "as old as the hills," looked quite in keeping with them; its cottages were all of stone, on which the mosses of many years had accumulated, and each had its little garden in which fuchsias flourished like trees, evidencing the mildness of the climate; while on their roofs, as if in emulation of the plots below, grew stonecrop and wallflowers. Vicarage it had none, for the clergyman lived at Barton; but it included two superior tenements—the one belonging to the doctor, which, although it did not establish its claim to

being "a cottage of gentility" by reason of "a double coach-house," possessed a single one in which stood the only vehicle of which Wallington could boast—the doctor's gig ; and the other Clover Cottage, inhabited by one Widow Gammer, who let the only lodgings in the place, and never lacked a summer tenant.

Down the winding village street, dividing it into two nearly equal parts, ran Barton Brook, a swift but shallow stream, whose brightness and vigour gave promise of some full-fed river laden with many a barque, but which immaturely perished in the devouring sea. It was spanned by two rustic bridges—one a practicable one close to the bay ; the other, like that one sees in the willow-pattern plate, was merely used for the foundations of a house, where Nature's productions, such as spar and shells, were sold, and which was considered by the designers of fancy note-paper one of the most picturesque objects in the county.

The church, strange to say, was not in the village, but stood half a mile away on the top of the Danecliff. It was a small Norman chapel, built probably as a thank-offering by some pious hand, rather than for the accommodation of a congregation ; but the parson from Barton came over on Sunday afternoon and preached there to such as could find room, and the coastguard made it a point of honour to be married and have their children christened there, instead of in the mother church at Barton.

In a community so simple, and a spot so retired, without any local lawgiver, such as a squire or a rector, it was but natural that the great hotel should occupy a very prominent position in the eyes of the Wallingtonians. Its customers were their patrons, and encouraged Industry in the shape of prawn and lobster fishing, portorage for picnic purposes, and the hire of boats for conveyance to marine objects of interest ; Commerce in the person of Mr. Mudge, the "universal provider" of the place, who sold everything that could be got for sixpence, from a stay-lace to a box of horse soldiers ; and Literature (in the fossil form) in the circulating library of the place, in which were to be found the novels of Mrs. Radcliffe, Miss Jane Porter, and even odd volumes of so recent an author as Sir Walter Scott.

Mrs. Trant, the landlady of the *Ultramarine*, was therefore, next to Queen Victoria, looked up to as the head of the State. In winter she reigned supreme, though in an empty palace ; but in summer she herself was the subject of her customers, whose wish was law—except that it couldn't so much as get an oyster opened on a Sunday—to the little community. From May to November, in fact, the form of government at Wallington Bay was an oligarchy, composed of the visitors to the *Ultramarine*, the prominence of each individual of which depended on his length of purse or strength of will.

This body, always a numerous one, was at present dominated over by Mrs. Armytage, an elderly lady, but, except to her waiting-maid, of youthful appearance. She had a carriage and pair, a pug dog called Fido, a pet canary of her own, and a husband who was devoted to science,

Next to her in weight and influence—but with this difference, that No. 2 possessed merely the dead weight of wealth, and had not the administrative capacities of the former lady—was Mrs. Jennynge, who had also a carriage and pair of her own, and a daughter by her second husband, a recently deceased drysalter of renown. There was one other person whose length of stay at the *Ultramarine* seemed to give him a claim to make up the triumvirate—Mr. Thomas Aird, a retired Indian official, who, with his little son, aged seven, had resided at the hotel since the spring. Besides these, there were several others with whom we shall make acquaintance in the course of this story; but those I have mentioned were the governing body. The rest seldom ventured, in Mrs. Armytage's presence, to express an opinion; or if they did, as Mr. Aird simply but forcibly expressed it, "they had their noses snapped off pretty sharp."

The social government of the place was, in short, a privy council composed of all the hotel guests, but only the prime minister and one or two other politicians (who secretly caballed against her, and were always in opposition) were allowed to have a voice in the direction of affairs. The *table-d'hôte* was a sort of Bed of Justice, over which, but in full dress, Mrs. Armytage presided, and laid down the law with a silver fork like Britannia with her trident. She always took the head of the table opposite the last comer (male), because she said the occupation of that position by a lady made the whole thing more like home. She forgot to add that it made it more like *her* home, with herself for its recognised mistress.

The dining-room was the old banqueting hall of the abbot's house, and terminated in a deep bay window in which Mrs. Armytage sat enthroned at the *table-d'hôte*, and by a turn of her head to either side could command an extensive view, which, moreover, comprised the approach to the hotel; and, without any reflection on that lady's taste for the picturesque, we may say that the arrivals and departures in connection with the *Ultramarine* interested her quite as much as landscape. The dinner-hour was six—an unfashionably early time which had been fixed upon, in opposition to Mrs. Armytage's wishes, to suit Mr. Aird's little Davey, from whom he was inseparable, and who always sat at his left hand at meals. She was wont to say that it was enough to spoil *any* child (with a stress upon the "any" which implied that Davey was spoiled already) to be sitting up with grown-up people at such an hour. But little Davey was very popular, and his cause had been advocated by so large a majority of the cabinet that the prime minister had to give way upon that point. Mrs. Jennynge was not, perhaps, a more ardent lover of children than herself, but she found this little peg very convenient to hang her opposition flag upon. Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, too—the homely old couple from Devonshire, whose existence at the council board Mrs. Armytage barely acknowledged—had for once raised their voices to the same effect; while Mr. Aird had bluntly said that if the dinner hour was made later he

would rather dine with the child in his own private sitting-room, and sacrifice the charms of Mrs. Armytage's society altogether.

Upon the afternoon on which our story opens the hotel company were seated as usual at the festive board, each, or each set, with their characteristic drinks before them. Mr. and Mrs. Armytage had their bottle of champagne, of which the latter, it was rather ill-naturedly said, got the lion's share; whereas, as the lady had explained again and again, she had been recommended "constant support," and only took it in that effervescent form by the doctor's orders; while her husband, the Professor, had been limited by the same authority to two or three glasses at most, on account of the morbid activity of his brain. With the exception of his brain, however, that gentleman was somewhat inert, his only exercise (he was an entomologist) being butterfly-catching, or rather the pursuit of that attractive insect, which he followed with a little green gauze net with greater perseverance than success. Mrs. and Miss Jennynge had a modest pint of Santerne between them—all, as the former had once remarked, they ever took in the way of stimulant, of which, in her opinion (with a side glance at the champagne bottle) a lady could hardly take too little. We say *once* remarked, because Mrs. Armytage's rejoinder, "You are not afraid of *your* brain, Mrs. Jennynge, surely," was so very prompt and curt that it was not likely that the observation would be repeated.

Mr. and Mrs. Wallace drank cider; some said because it looked like champagne and might deceive the public, but in reality because they were used to it at home. Their two next neighbours were Mr. Felspar, the landscape painter, and his friend, Mr. Vernon, both lodging at Mrs. Gammer's in the village, and only occasional guests at the *table-d'hôte*. The artist was a man of thirty; but he looked younger than his years, from the circumstance of his having a delicate complexion and wearing neither beard nor whisker. This deficiency, however, was fully compensated for by the hair of his head, which, though worn long and in profusion, had always the appearance of being blown back by the wind, and caused him, combined with his eager eyes and fair complexion, to resemble a good angel on a gargoyle. His companion was some years his junior, and, if not so angelic, better looking. His features were delicate and of olive hue, with which the bright black moustache upon his lip contrasted very becomingly. These two young gentlemen had some ordinary claret before them, for which Mrs. Trant knew better than to charge them any extraordinary price. Mr. Aird had a bottle of Madeira, though it was a wine that was understood to be much at variance with his already debilitated liver; while little Davey had a pint all to himself of what he firmly believed to be a rare and ancient vintage, but which in reality consisted of currant wine and water. He sipped it like a connoisseur, with his little golden head on one side, and one blue eye closed like a blonde raven, exactly as he had seen his father do. His napkin tucked under his chin to save his summer raiment from stain gave him the air of a gourmand, though he had the

good sense (acting upon instructions beforehand, and not submitting, it was to be understood, to dictation before folks) to reject such dishes as were unwholesome. He had once admitted in a moment of confidence that he "loved his little stomach" (by which he intended, upon the principle, perhaps, that the greater includes the less, to indicate the things which he put into it); but, for all his grown-up ways and manners, he was essentially childlike. Upon the present occasion, for example, on the sound of wheel and hoof being heard without, the pleasures of the table sank into insignificance with him. The modicum of fish he was about to convey to his mouth was replaced quickly upon his plate, and in a moment he had stepped quietly down from his high chair, and, drawn by an irrepressible curiosity, had taken his station in the bay window.

"If I had a boy like that," observed Mrs. Armytage, with serene severity, "I'd——"

"You never will," put in Mr. Aird, with confidence.

"Never will what, sir?" inquired the lady, with indignation, and a look of appeal towards her husband.

But the Professor, never moved to wrath unless his theory of the *Lepidoptera* was questioned, and deep in the dissection of a whiting, never so much as raised his head.

"I only meant," explained Mr. Aird, repenting of his burst of temper, which in the case of any affront offered to his offspring he could never restrain, "I only meant that there never could be another child like Davey."

"One would hope not, if he is to behave like that," retorted the lady; "though it is not to be expected, when children of seven years old are allowed to dine late with their seniors, that anything like discipline——"

"There are *four* horses," cried little Davey from the window, from which he was prospecting down the road, like another Sister Anne, in total unconsciousness of being a *casus belli*; "a carriage and four, papa; pray come and look!"

"*Four* horses!" exclaimed Mrs. Armytage, in the excitement of the moment forgetting her own canons of etiquette, and rising from her chair to better reconnoitre the approaching vehicle.

"*Four* horses!" murmured Mrs. Wallace, from her side of the table, from which a view was to be obtained. "I don't know that I ever saw a carriage and four horses in my life."

"Did you never see a coach, lass?" inquired her husband; and pursued his repast with philosophic calm.

"*Four* horses!" murmured Mrs. Jennynge. "Who can it be? What do you think, Professor?"

"*I*, madam?" returned that gentleman, withdrawing his mind from scientific reflection and the whiting to grasp the problem thus unexpectedly presented to his notice. "If it is anything with four horses, it is most probably a hearse."

"Is it not extraordinary," whispered Vernon to Felspar, "how two extra post-horses can thus interest the female mind?"

"It is not *that*," returned his friend; "for if there were eight horses instead of four, it would proclaim a travelling caravan, which would not interest them at all. It is the suggestion of wealth conveyed in the number four (in harness) which makes it as significant as the number seven in magic."

"Small things agitate small minds," observed Vernon, didactically.

"Oh, papa! Oh, Mr. Vernon!" exclaimed little Davey, "there is such a bootiful young lady in the carriage!"

The Professor wiped his mouth and turned round in his chair, while Vernon hurriedly left his seat and joined the child in the bay window, no doubt with the intention of administering admonition and reproof. "My dear Davey," he said, "it is very wrong to stare at strangers;" but at the same time he glanced at the new arrival on his own account.

He had seen a good many pretty faces in his time, both in real life and in his friend Felspar's portfolio, who had a talent for drawing them; but neither nature nor art had hitherto shown him one so fair as that which was now presented to him. His glance became permanent; in spite of himself he could not withdraw his eyes.

"It appears to me, Mr. Vernon," said Mrs. Armytage, severely, "that you are falling into the same error for which you have just reproved that child. Your profession"—and being that of letters, she entertained for it a very proper contempt—"gives you a great choice of epithets, which, I am told, you are not slow to apply to others. What would you call *me* if I was to stand and stare at every new comer like that?"

"Beautiful!" murmured the unconscious Vernon. "Most beautiful, and modesty itself."

CHAPTER III.

THE LADIES' DRAWING-ROOM.

WHO has not experienced, after a brief sojourn, it may be of a few weeks or even days, in a strange scene and among new people, a certain sense of the division of existence; a feeling that one's life has been distributed into two parts, one of which, lasting for it may be about half a century, we have got married in, begotten children, made our fortune, or lost it, and in short played the usual parts in the human life drama; while the other half we seem to have spent at Muddleton-on-Sea, where we arrived a fortnight ago or so and are still resident! The Present is so real and actual when contrasted with the Past, its impressions are so much more vivid than the strongest efforts of memory, that time and events count almost for nothing in the comparison. And though a day will come, perhaps, when Muddleton itself will be so utterly effaced from our recollection that we may doubt whether it was we ourselves who visited it, or a friend who described it to us, for the nonce it reigns supreme, and we are Muddletonians.

And thus it was with the guests at the *Ultramarine* at Wallington Bay. The hotel, where they had all been staying for some time, with an intention to prolong their visit, had become a second home to them, and, for the nonce, Wallington was their world. The events that occurred in it were insignificant enough, but circumstances had invested them with importance. What these good people did was little ; but, since it was all they had to do, it monopolised their attention. Limited as was the sphere of their existence, there was room in it for intrigues, jealousies, and all human passions. A bijou theatre suffices as well as a San Carlo for the representation of the drama of life. The *table-d'hôte* alone displayed a multiplicity of phases of character ; here every one met on common ground, and, though one had the supremacy, her sway, as we have seen, was not undisputed. Rebellion reared its impious head in the form of Mr. Aird, and insubordination showed itself, though less audaciously, in that of Mr. Vernon.

In the ladies' drawing-room, on the other hand, to which the fair sex generally repaired after the chief meal of the day, Mrs. Armytage reigned supreme ; the impatience of authority occasionally manifested by Mrs. and Miss Jennynge was there subdued by terror. On the day on which our story opens, however, there was no room for antagonism in the minds of the occupants of this apartment ; they were occupied, to the exclusion of all lower passions, by the enthralling topic of the new arrivals. It is true that, for the moment, the master spirit was absent, as, on the conclusion of the *table-d'hôte*, Mrs. Armytage had gone straight to Mrs. Trant's parlour in order to glean from her all the particulars of which she might be possessed concerning the occupants of the barouche and four. Mrs. and Miss Jennynge, Mrs. Wallace, and some other ladies, including Mrs. Percival-Lott—an attractive-looking young person, suspected of being a bride, but who rarely opened her lips except to her husband, and even then apparently only to show her teeth—were awaiting her return with eager curiosity. The arm-chair which Mrs. Armytage usually occupied was vacant ; it was beyond Mrs. Jennynge's courage to take possession of it, but in the interregnum she had assumed the airs of sovereignty, and was dispensing patronage.

"From my position at the *table-d'hôte*," she said, "I was unable to catch sight of these strangers ; nor did I think it *comme il faut*" (Mrs. Jennynge had a great command of French phrases, though in her daughter's presence she was a little shy of exhibiting that gift ; she would look at her, after indulging in them, with rather an apprehensive air in case anything might have gone wrong with her accent or their application)—"I say I did not think it *en règle* to turn round in my chair, and stare as one of us did who shall be nameless ; but you, Mrs. Wallace, were on the other side of the table and could command a view of them. Do tell us honestly what they were like."

To do Mrs. Wallace justice, the adjuration was scarcely necessary ; if she could not have told her story honestly, it is certain she could not have

told it at all. She had not the faculty of "making the thing that is not as the thing that is;" and, moreover, being old-fashioned, and having been brought up in the country, would have thought it wrong to do so. She was a farmer's daughter and a farmer's wife, and had come from her Devon home to Wallington Bay to recover from the effects of a domestic calamity. She never intended to offer opposition to anybody, but, through simplicity, she very often did it.

"Well, ma'am, I had only a glimmer of them from where I sat, myself," she replied; "but the gentleman looked a real gentleman though sickly, and his daughter—for I am sure they are father and daughter—seemed a very sweet creature."

"Any style?" inquired Miss Jennyng, languidly. She was a tall wasp of a girl, with dark hair worn *à l'Impératrice* sufficient for ten girls; her gown was so tight at the knees that you expected them to come through, and a little train jerked behind her as she walked as though an invisible dog was hanging on to her ankle.

"Style?" echoed Mrs. Wallace, simply; the word recalled for a moment "the simple stile from mead to mead" about her Devon home; the next instant she would have understood readily enough what was meant, but, unfortunately, the requisite time was not allowed her.

"My daughter means was the girl *chic-chic*," observed Mrs. Jennyng, condescending to explain, but with some impatience of manner.

Poor Mrs. Wallace was more puzzled than ever; she had got out of the fields only to find herself in a poultry-yard.

"Oh, yes; she was quite young," observed the good lady, confidently.

"I can answer your question, Miss Jennyng," interposed the suspected bride. "I could see enough of the young lady to remark that she was far from distinguished-looking: indeed, some people would call her dowdy."

"Your husband told me he thought her pretty," observed Miss Jennyng, maliciously.

Here Mrs. Percival-Lott began to show her teeth to some purpose, and would probably have "said things" had not Mrs. Armytage entered at that moment bearing in her arms—instead of her pug dog as usual—an enormous book.

"Oh, my dears!" she exclaimed excitedly, "what *do* you think?"

That Mrs. Armytage should have described the company as "my dears" was inexplicable; but there are moments in human life when the barriers of social prejudice are broken down, and the heart claims the right to speak. "I have found it all out! Here is his name in black and white;" and she touched the volume she had just placed on the table with impressive reverence. "The name of the gentleman is Josceline, and he is an Honourable."

"You don't say so!" ejaculated Mrs. Jennyng.

"Well, I never!" cried Mrs. Wallace; not intending to convey a vulgar astonishment, but only the simple fact that she had never happened to have seen an Honourable before.

Mrs. Armytage regarded her for a moment with withering scorn, and then opened the sacred volume.

"This," she said, "is the Peerage. It is an old edition; but that is of small consequence, as one does not care for late creations."

"Of course not," said Mrs. Jennynge with magnificent contempt, as though she was speaking of early dinners.

"The word Josceline," resumed Mrs. Armytage, who only needed a glass of water to complete her resemblance to a public lecturer, "appears more than once in these pages; but the point of difference is the *s*. The Roden family, for example, spell their name with a *c* only." This information was hailed with quite a burst of satisfaction from all the ladies, including even Mrs. Wallace; she did not quite comprehend what the lecture was about, but she thought it must be very convenient to any family to spell their name with a single letter.

"The gentleman of whom we are speaking—and who is now staying at this hotel—is a cadet of the house of Boroughby; the title of the eldest son is Lord St. Stephens."

She paused to allow these mighty names to have their full significance, and also to mark their effect. She enjoyed the supremacy of the situation exceedingly, and, to use a very inappropriate (because common) expression, smacked her lips over it.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Mrs. Jennynge, settling the strings of her lace cap with nervous fingers; "pray go on."

"Here is the record," continued Mrs. Armytage, alluding to the volume with the same solemnity that a Jewish Rabbi might treat the tables of the law. "Boroughby, Earl of; George—evidently a family name, as you will see—George Francis Camperdown, Earl of Boroughby, Viscount St. Stephens; also Baron Pollen in the peerage of Ireland; Lord Lieutenant of Loamshire; commandant of Loamshire yeomanry. Married Lady Theresa Augusta Fitzmarmalade, daughter of the Earl of Jellybag, K.P., and has issue"—concluded Mrs. Armytage triumphantly, as though, in the case of a couple so distinguished, such an event was almost more than could be looked for—"Lady Catherine Dorothea, Charles Frederick Viscount St. Stephens, Henrietta Maria Georgina, and—here we have him—George Emilius Josceline; he was forty-nine last September."

"Dearie me!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace with unfeigned astonishment; "how in the world did you find that out?"

"If you had ever *seen* a Peerage," returned Mrs. Armytage, pitifully, like a shocked missionary addressing the heathen, "you would know that the date of birth of every member of the aristocracy is inscribed in its pages."

"That must be rather hard upon the ladies," observed Mrs. Wallace, who, though impervious to satire, had a touch of simple drollery about her. Unhappily, in looking round for approbation of this stroke of humour, her eye fell upon Miss Jennynge. That that young lady would have liked

to have had her name in the Peerage was certain, yet that revelation as to age would in her case have been a serious drawback. She was standing not on the brink of the rivulet "where womanhood and childhood meet," but much lower down the river, and she took poor Mrs. Wallace's observation as a personal one.

"All jokes are vulgar," she observed; "but especially jokes upon a serious subject."

"La, Miss Jennynge, the Peerage ain't the Bible!" pleaded Mrs. Wallace. The other ladies pursed their lips and shook their heads; in principle they felt they were right, though in this particular case their antagonist might have the advantage of them.

"I am afraid you are a special pleader," sighed Mrs. Armytage; and all the other ladies sighed in sympathy like Æolian harps. "The question is," she resumed with the air of one who dismisses trifles for an important subject, "shall we have Mr. and Miss Josceline at the *table-d'hôte*?"

"Why, dear me, how could we keep 'em out of it?" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace.

"Keep them out!" echoed Mrs. Armytage, elevating her jewelled fingers; "what extraordinary observations, Mrs. Wallace, you are making this evening! Who would dream—unless to be sure," she added, significantly, "one was an atheist or a democrat—of keeping them out? What I meant to inquire was whether they would join the general table."

"To-night at all events, since the young lady will be tired," remarked Mrs. Jennynge, "she is almost sure to have a *dîner à part*."

"That, I think, may be taken for granted," observed Mrs. Wallace. "She is sure to dine with her Pa at all events."

Miss Jennynge laughed and threw her head up—it was one of those few portions of her frame which her mode of dress left at her own disposal—in impatience and disdain, like a high-mettled horse.

"What have I said now?" thought poor Mrs. Wallace, "to make that girl so angry? My belief is that the strain upon her knees affects her temper."

"I think," said Mrs. Armytage, thoughtfully, "that it would be only civil—and—polite—especially as the young lady has no female companion—if one of us, as the representative of the rest, should leave her card upon the new arrivals. They have taken number fourteen sitting-room on the first floor."

"By all means let us all leave our cards," said Mrs. Jennynge, eagerly; "it would be only as you say—I don't mean *à propos*; what is the word, Julia?"

Julia shrugged her shoulders, and in so doing escaped so completely from her clothes that it was fortunate no gentleman, as sometimes happened, chanced to have joined the drawing-room party.

"I'm sure I don't know what you mean, Mrs. Jennynge," rejoined Mrs. Armytage, sharply. "The idea of our all leaving our cards! Why, it

would be like a round robin, which is only used when one wants to complain of something. My proposal was that one of us should act as the representative of the rest."

If the Earl of Boroughby had addressed his tenants in the same words, with Lord St. Stephens on his right hand as a candidate for a seat in Parliament, it could not have been more obvious to whom he referred than that on the present occasion Mrs. Armytage was referring to herself; nor was the result more doubtful. But, though defeated, Mrs. Jennynge had a kick in her yet. "In that case," she observed, "I think we had better select the oldest of us."

"I beg you won't," observed Mrs. Wallace, with a pretence of apprehension; "for, though Mrs. Armytage may run me very near, I believe as to years that I have the advantage of her."

As Mrs. Wallace openly proclaimed herself to be sixty, and playfully likened herself to a withered apple (which, indeed, she greatly resembled), the humility of this speech did not go far to make it palatable to the person to whom it referred.

"As the lady who has been longest *in the house*," answered Mrs. Armytage, emphatically, with a glance of scorn at Mrs. Jennynge, "and waiving any other claim such as might be derived from social position or otherwise, I accept the task which has thus unanimously been entrusted to me. I will call upon the Honourable George Emilius Josceline and his daughter to-morrow afternoon."

CHAPTER IV.

A VISITOR.

THE attendance at the public breakfast table next morning at the *Ultramarine* was more punctual than usual. Every one was on the *qui vive*, as Mrs. Jennynge expressed it, to see the new comers, the tidings of whose rank and importance had spread far and wide. Whenever the door opened every one looked up with expectation, except the suspected bride and bridegroom. Mr. Percival-Lott kept his eyes fixed on his plate, and Mrs. Percival-Lott kept her eyes riveted on him. When all were seated, and the next arrival was bound to be the expected pair, quite a murmur of discontent went round the table when, instead of them, Mr. Charles Vernon presented himself.

"And to what are we indebted for *your* presence this morning?" inquired Mrs. Armytage, with a bitterness which, for once, the company thought not uncalled for.

"I am come, madam," said Vernon—with a hasty glance around him, which, curiously enough, reflected the general disappointment—"for breakfast. Felspar has gone out to paint some 'early effects,' and, being averse to a solitary meal, I have ventured to intrude my presence upon you."

"Very prettily expressed, I am sure," growled Mr. Aird, who was always cynical and cantankerous until midday, and sometimes later.

"Come and sit by me, Mr. Vernon," cried little Davey, "and then you can see the pretty lady;" and he pointed with his small finger to the two vacant chairs on the opposite side of the table.

Mr. Vernon had been at a public school, and at college, and had also moved in good society, but he blushed to the roots of his hair, and took his seat without a word.

"By Jingo!" murmured Mr. Percival-Lott, just preserving himself from bursting into a roar of laughter by an application of muffin.

"I see nothing to laugh at in the child's remark," answered his youthful spouse, severely; "his forwardness is simply disgusting."

"Very much so; I deplore it," answered her husband, hurriedly. He was a blonde gentleman with a fluffy moustache, and with that sort of complexion which exhibits on the least provocation the innermost emotions of the soul. He felt all the delight which a young man naturally experiences at the discomfiture of a contemporary of his own sex, and was not, perhaps, displeased that his views of the charms of Miss Josceline (which had been much depreciated by Mrs. Lott) should be thus corroborated by an independent opinion.

"What an *enfant terrible* that is!" whispered Mrs. Jennynge to her neighbour, Mrs. Wallace, "and also what an *enfant gâté*."

"He is all that, no doubt, ma'am," answered that lady, admiringly. "I always prefer children's talk to that of grown-up people, because it is so truthful. What a funny little trot he is!"

As the meal went on without sign of the new comers, Mrs. Armytage beckoned to one of the neat-handed Phyllises who, at the *Ultramarine*, performed to admiration the duties discharged elsewhere by greasy waiters, and asked her some question in a whisper. At the reply she raised her eyebrows and her eyeglasses, and thus addressed the company:—

"You will be sorry to hear, ladies and gentlemen, that there will be no addition to our party this morning, and still more for the cause. The Honourable Mr. Josceline is indisposed."

"Nothing catching, I hope?" inquired Mr. Aird, with an anxious look at the child beside him.

"Catching!" echoed Mrs. Armytage, contemptuously, as though, in connection with a person so distinguished, such a supposition could only have occurred to a very vulgar nature. "Esther tells me that she heard a word dropped about palpitations. There is always something interesting to my mind in any matter connected with the heart."

"Yes, yes; an *affaire de cœur*," assented Mrs. Jennynge; "all sorts of charming things have been written about it."

"Lots of things have been written about the liver, too," grumbled Mr. Aird, with the air of one who had read them; "and none of them worth twopence."

"Well; whatever we may have thought of the matter last night," observed Mrs. Armytage, rising from the breakfast table, "it is now quite certain that my call upon Miss Josceline is indispensable. As ladies and Christians, since her noble father is prostrated on a bed of sickness, we cannot do less than offer her our condolences."

"One moment," pleaded Mr. Aird; and Mrs. Armytage, having sailed down the *salle-à-manger* in her stately fashion, delayed for one moment at the threshold. "If it's palpitations, you may take my word for it there is nothing like peppermint drops—you can get them at Mudge's emporium for threepence an ounce."

If Mrs. Armytage had had the patience, she would have learned from her informant how to obtain them even cheaper by purchasing a quantity, but she flounced out of the room in a huff. As respected Mr. Josceline, she was secretly not displeased that he should be afflicted with a slight indisposition; it would tend, as she imagined, to throw him and his daughter into her own hands, and to isolate him from the rest of the hotel company. On the other hand, she hoped he would not be ill enough to cause Dr. Cooper to be sent for—a person altogether unworthy of such patronage, and who, when consulted as a friend about her Fido's illness—when it seemed that the little darling was about to be taken from her—had thus delivered his professional opinion: "The brute is overfed, ma'am; as to his looking black under the eyes, pugs generally do; make him walk and dock his vittles."

It was her duty now to prepare Fido's breakfast—a simple farinaceous meal composed of biscuits, cream, and sugar—and then to hold a medical consultation with her maid respecting Philomel, her pet canary, one of whose feathers had been discovered at the bottom of his cage.

"If the sweet creature is not moulting, Jane, what can be the alternative?" was her agonised inquiry.

"Perhaps, ma'am," replied the maid, at her wits' end, "the cat have got at it"—a suggestion that increased the apprehension of her mistress twenty-fold.

It is in such cases as these that natures given up to frivolity and idleness succumb to their fears and regrets. That of Mrs. Armytage, however, was supported by a strong sense of social duty; and knowing that there were but a few hours before her, including the period allotted to lunch, she at once began to occupy herself in preparations in connection with her toilette, for the interview with the distinguished invalid.

When she said that the Joscelines had taken a first-floor apartment, she might have added, had she known it, that it was the best in the house; but it was a part of Mrs. Trant's calling, and one that helped to place her so deservedly high in it, to persuade every guest that he or she had secured the best sitting-room in the hotel, whereas the best was, if possible, always kept vacant in case of some tremendous contingency such as the sudden arrival of a person of great consequence, which had now occurred.

The apartment in question had three windows commanding a noble view of land and sea, and was furnished, though not expensively, in a much more liberal manner than is usual with hotel sitting-rooms. It had easy-chairs without a broken spring in the middle of them to suggest activity instead of ease; sofas from which the human body could be kept from sliding without continual support; and little tables that did not "tip" on touch as though they were under the patronage of spirits. On one of the tables was a vase of fresh flowers—an attention always paid by Mrs. Trant to new-comers; and even a few books, including a county directory, some *Contributions to the History of the Danecliff* (a pamphlet by the Vicar of Barton), and an old volume of the *Mirror* for 1816.

Mr. Josceline, however, was independent of these literary attentions, since he never travelled without his own library, consisting of a pocket volume of Horace. He was reading it now, or rather dipping into it as one does dip into Horace, ever and anon looking out through the open window from his easy-chair, in reflection, I think, on some text from his favourite author, rather than entranced with the sights and sounds of nature. He was what Mrs. Jennynge would have termed *en déshabillé*: in a silk dressing-gown and with a little smoking cap which he in reality wore to conceal a slight baldness, and for which he found excuse in cigarettes. He was looking languid and pale, but less ill than bored. It was clear that the charms of Wallington Bay had made very little impression on him; the expression of his face was apathetic, except when it was turned towards his daughter; then, if he caught her eye, he smiled; if otherwise, the apathy would give way to perplexity and occasionally to gloom.

Ella had been making cigarettes for him with a little machine she had brought from Paris; but, having completed as many as she thought he would require for the day, she had taken up some work of her own with which she was busying herself in silence. She had learnt never to be the first to commence conversation when alone with her father.

"What is that you are toiling at, Ella?" he inquired, presently; "it looks to me like a bonnet."

"My dear papa, I hope it will look like that to every one," she answered, cheerfully, "because it's meant for a bonnet."

"But I thought you bought a bonnet at Madame Cheris's?"

"So I did, papa; but a young lady does not wear a bonnet, as a man wears his hat, till it wears out."

"But I never made a hat in my life, Ella, and why should you make your own bonnets?"

"My dear papa, you don't understand the position. Nothing is so terrible, you must know, as for a girl to be seen every day in the same bonnet. That is one of the great things we look to, we women, in one another: 'Is that the same bonnet she wore yesterday, or last week, or last summer?' we say to ourselves; 'and is that a new dress, or is it turned or dyed?' Now, nobody but a millionaire could afford to get two bonnets at Madame Cheris's; so I buy one and take it for a pattern;

then, like Prometheus with his spark from heaven, I make a bonnet for myself."

It was evident that her father was amused by her gaiety, and even flattered by it, for, strange to say, it was inherited. There had been a time—alas, how long ago!—when he, too, had been light-hearted and witty. The wit remained in a certain crystallised form, and occasionally was even "happy;" but the gaiety of heart had departed.

"But, my dear Ella, suppose any one should come in and find my daughter making bonnets?"

"Then you, dear papa, would have to put your daughter on the sofa—for of course she would be in a dead faint—remove the pillow, and burn feathers under her nose till she comes to."

She spoke thus very playfully, but with a certain earnestness also, as though arguing against something unexpressed.

"And how much do you save by this operation in bonnets?" he inquired, gravely.

"Madame Cheris charges eight pounds; my materials cost me, perhaps, two, and my time is valueless. I save, therefore, six pounds. If I had a pencil I could make sure of it, but I think that is seventy-five per cent."

"Your facts are indisputable, Ella. Nevertheless, remember what I told you about the four posters. There is such a thing as false economy. For the future, when you have a bonnet to make, oblige me, at all events, by making it in your own room."

"I will take it up at once, dear papa," said Ella, cheerfully. "And I will bring down your medicine with me; it is time for you to take it."

Mr. Josceline glanced after her, as she left the room, with a yearning look which was, however, but momentary. "The girl is an angel," he muttered; "but, unhappily, one is not in heaven."

His eyes fell once more on his book, but this time he seemed to find no pleasure in its perusal. His brow contracted, and his thin white fingers also, and twice and again he struck his clenched hand against his knee. It was not of Horace he was thinking then, but of his own irrevocable past. There was a home spirit at his right hand, but he had no home to offer her—the time was over for that; but, for the moment, the reflection that it was so, spread gloom upon his soul. It so changed his face that Ella noticed it as she entered the room.

"Are you not feeling so well, papa? I do trust you will dine alone with me to-day, and not venture upon the excitement of the *table-d'hôte*."

"Yes; if the people are like the place," he said, with his usual quiet cynicism, "it will, indeed, be a vortex of gaiety. Still, I shall risk it."

"Not to-day, papa," she pleaded; "you are more of an invalid, I fear, than you imagine."

He shook his head and murmured to himself, "There is, therefore, the less time to lose;" then added aloud, "It will do me good; change always does."

If it was so, Mr. Josceline ought to have been in very robust health;

for he had been a rolling stone, which, if it had gathered no moss, had rolled on it. Leisure and ease had been his own for many a year; his only experience of want had been on one occasion (which he had never forgotten) when his champagne had been served for him in some place in the provinces without ice, owing to the total absence of that commodity. The incident ranked in his mind with such examples of barbarism as are recorded of Patagonia, and in the tales of destitution that are narrated concerning shipwrecks. "If you will believe me," he would say with feeling, "there was not a pound of rough ice, far less of Wenham, in the whole town!"

He had never had any large command of money, but, with the exception of a small sum allotted to Ella's schooling and maintenance, he had scrupulously spent what he had upon his own pleasures; his income would have been amply sufficient for himself and her little needs now that she was grown up, and had become his companion in their life's journey, but unfortunately it died with him. With this fact (for which he had himself to blame) his conscience reproached him not bitterly (for, as we have said, it was a very gentlemanly conscience), but perceptibly; it filled him with an anxiety, he would not, perhaps, otherwise have experienced, to get his daughter settled in life. His experience, manners, and even tastes, he estimated as so many investments in her favour: he had had to pay for them pretty handsomely; but, if they procured her a good position, she would have little, he persuaded himself, to complain of on the score of his having squandered the hard cash. Until he knew her—that is, until some six months ago—he had felt, from circumstances which will be explained hereafter, but little remorse; but he had learnt to love the girl as he had never loved any one before (always excepting George Emilius Josceline), and to feel, though without openly admitting them, the obligations of a parent.

As one who knows argument to be useless, Ella uttered a little sigh, and having administered the medicine to her father very carefully—for it was a most powerful drug—took out some drawing materials, and, seating herself at the window, began to sketch.

Mr. Josceline, still affecting to be deep in Horace, watched her furtively from under the hand he put up to screen himself from the sun; glare was obnoxious to him, as were all loud sounds and powerful odours; an organ in the street gave him acute pain; and if a wallflower chanced to be in the room with him, it turned him faint. Yet by nature he was by no means effeminate: as a young man he had been a bold rider and no despicable opponent with the gloves, and as a fencer he had had no rival at the university; but, in the process of destroying his constitution, he had developed "nerves." The least thing unstrung him; and but for his solicitude for his reputation for good manners, or, in other words, for a certain superfine calm, he would have become a prey to irritability.

"You have a set of very busy fingers, Ella," he presently said. "Even to look at them puts me in a fidget."

"Shall I read to you, dear papa? I am afraid I cannot manage Horace, but I'll try."

"No, thank you, my dear," said the invalid precipitately; "in my present state of health a false quantity would be worse than a double dose of that stuff," pointing to the medicine with a gesture of disgust. "Why are you putting away your pencils?"

"I thought my drawing worried you; Dr. Dufaure said you were to be kept free from all annoyances."

"That is, unhappily, a prescription that cannot easily be made up," sighed Mr. Josceline; "pray go on with your amusement. There can be no harm in it unless you flatter yourself it is work."

"Well, papa, it is work to me; that is to say, it is the one thing which, when I have done well, I feel satisfied with myself about."

"You think you are a great artist, do you?"

"Dear papa, oh, no! On the contrary, I feel I am only on the threshold of art, not even across it. I only meant that when I have done a careful piece of drawing, it seems to me that I have not been idling away my time."

"How so? what's the good of it, more—I don't say than a tune on the piano, because the drawing remains and the sound vanishes—but more than a bit of lacework, for example? Do you propose to make your living by it?" he added, suddenly.

Ella crimsoned from brow to chin, but remained silent.

"Now, my dear child, pray do not give way to illusions. For a young lady of your condition and advantages to take up drawing as a profession is what mechanics call a waste of power. You might just as well take up clear-starching. I have not the slightest objection to your pursuing it as an amusement, mind; or even to your pursuing it with the aid of masters; but what I fear is that this occupation may lead your mind into a wrong direction—and, perhaps, yourself with it."

"I do not quite follow you, papa," said Ella, tremulously.

"You follow me quite sufficiently, my dear; you are one of those to whom a hint is as significant as a sermon, and I never preach sermons, you know."

"No, indeed, papa," she interrupted, with tender gravity; "I don't think you ever could."

Here a very curious circumstance happened, and one which to Ella (notwithstanding the compliment just paid to her intelligence) was wholly inexplicable. The blood rushed into her father's cheeks, and his eyes sought the ground with an unmistakable look of discomfort and annoyance: the instant afterwards he fixed them on her face with a look of sharp suspicion. They read nothing there but a surprised solicitude, and a desire to please him at all hazards that was never absent from it.

"You are a good girl, and will, I know, obey my wishes," he said, gently. "Let me see your drawing."

She put it into his hand with a smile that would have disarmed any critic of the male sex.

"It is very nicely done," he said; "but there are five hundred girls, in art schools and elsewhere, who could have done it better."

"I am quite sure of that, papa," she answered, confidently.

"And not ten of them, my dear, will ever make a hundred pounds a year by such a calling. You have no idea," he added, smiling, "what a much prettier picture you make yourself."

She rose, and, with exquisite grace which yet contrived to include a touch of humour, made him an elaborate courtesy. There were many prettier girls in the world than Ella Josceline, but very few had such a charm of manner. This is well understood in society to be worth cultivation; but, unhappily, models are scarce. Of the drawling girl, and the gushing girl, and the would-be meretricious or fast girl, we have many specimens; but the girl that ventures to be natural is seldom found. Ella had this rare courage, and, to those who could read nature, it was irresistible.

It was possible that her father might have paid her another compliment, for he was very pleased, and also willing to improve the occasion; but at this moment there was a knock at the door, and Phœbe, the neat-handed, entered.

"If you please, Miss, Mrs. Armytage's compliments, and might she be permitted to make a call upon you?"

"Mrs. Armytage? I do not know the lady; there must be some mistake," said Ella.

"It is about a subscription for the Tonga Missionary Fund, or the Floating Church for Sailors," murmured Mr. Josceline. "Tell her I'm ill."

"Oh, sir, please sir, she knows *that*!" said Phœbe, overhearing the last word. "It is on that very account, she says, that she hopes you will see her. She thinks she has something that will do you good."

"That must be tracts," muttered the invalid. "Tell her, my good girl, that we will read anything she will be so good as to send us; but that I regret exceedingly my health will not permit of a personal interview."

"La, bless ye, sir! it ain't reading; it's a poultice or summut."

"Good heavens!" cried Mr. Josceline, "she must be mad. Who is she?"

"Well, sir, she's been here the longest in the house, and is a lady very much looked up to."

Ella was once more about to excuse herself on the ground of her father's indisposition, when, to her great surprise, he answered for himself:—

"Say, if the lady does not mind my being in invalid costume, we shall be happy to see her."

Whereupon, no sooner had the door closed, than, with a celerity that very distinctly conveyed the idea that she had been waiting in the passage, it was reopened by Mrs. Armytage herself.

She entered with a visiting card in her hand, which, after polite salutations made and received, she laid on the table by Mr. Josceline with the air of some highly trained and intelligent animal.

"In most cases," she said, "an apology should be made for such a volunteer visit; but I trust that the wife of Timothy Armytage will be acquitted of the charge of intrusion."

"She is certainly mad," murmured Mr. Josceline to himself; but what he observed aloud and very graciously was, "The name of Armytage, madam, is very familiar to me."

CHAPTER V.

THE MAP OF THE COUNTRY.

"I SHOULD in any case," said Mrs. Armytage, addressing herself in a low tone to Ella, "have done myself the honour of calling upon you, but the knowledge of your father's indisposition has somewhat precipitated matters. In the event of it being palpitations, and supposing he should have decided upon sending for Dr. Cooper—an excellent person, no doubt, but hardly accustomed to delicate and—ahem!—highly-wrought organisations, I possess a sovereign remedy. I have not brought it with me," she added, in answer to Ella's look of amazement, "but the cook is preparing it in a saucepan under my directions.—You have a fine look-out from your window, Mr. Josceline, however unfavourably an hotel apartment may contrast with those to which you have naturally been accustomed."

"The hotel is an excellent one," said Mr. Josceline, in the honeyed voice that was more pleasing to strangers than to those that knew him; it often concealed a contempt that suddenly showed itself in biting satire. "And if it were not so good," he continued, "the company to be found in it, to judge by the present specimen"—he indicated Mrs. Armytage herself by a courteous bow—"would more than make up for material shortcomings."

"You are very kind to say so," returned his visitor, "but—if I may make the observation without vanity—perhaps I am scarcely an example of what is popularly called 'the common run' of visitors at the *Ultra-marine*."

"Heaven forbid, madam," ejaculated Mr. Josceline, fervently, "that I should have imagined that for a single moment."

"I am among them, but not of them," resumed Mrs. Armytage, in further explanation. "My husband's eminence in science——"

"Mr. Toby Armytage," observed Mr. Josceline, referring, somewhat unsuccessfully, to the card at his elbow.

"Timothy, sir—Professor Timothy Armytage," returned the lady, with some stress upon the prefix; "a man of European reputation, and who has given his name to a whole division of the *genus scarabæides*—the beetle family."

Mr. Josceline, beginning to think that he had heard the name, though erroneously confusing it with some advertisement of a patent insect killer, murmured, "Of course."

"I say, possessing a husband so eminent, and tastes of my own which I hope elevate me above the common herd, I can hardly be expected to amalgamate with the society that chance collects within the walls of an hotel."

"But being an observer of human nature," said Mr. Josceline, smiling—for he was not only much amused, but saw his way to getting a *carte du pays*—"you know all about them doubtless. Now, my daughter and I being strangers here, I should be very thankful for information upon that point. I need not say whatever you tell us will be in the strictest confidence."

"Oh, they know what I think of them!" was the frank reply. "I am one of those who speak plain English. Not like Mrs. Jennynge, whose every other word is French, or what she believes to be such. That her name is Jennings, pure and simple, I have no more doubt than that that's a slipper."

Mr. Josceline modestly drew the foot to which allusion had thus been made, beneath his dressing gown, and remarked gently, "Perhaps she changed it for money?"

"Not she," returned Mrs. Armytage, disdainfully. "She didn't get her money that way, bless you. Her husband was something—well, I think, in the cotton line."

"And the lady herself is a remnant?"

"Now, that's capital!" said Mrs. Armytage, putting up her glasses and regarding her companion with undisguised approval; "I should not have thought that a person of your position—an Honourable and that—would have known what 'a remnant' was. Yes; she's a widow, for the second time, and very rich."

"May we add without incumbrance?" inquired Mr. Josceline, airily.

"We may not indeed, sir; she has a daughter—such a daughter!" and Mrs. Armytage threw up her hands in a manner which might have expressed anything except approbation. "Her name is Anastasia, I believe, but her mother calls her 'Statty.' Gaunt, angular, half dressed, and ill balanced."

"As to her mind, you mean?"

"No; her heels. They are so high that she leans forward like the Tower of Pisa, and threatens to fall like that of Babel. And she's a tongue like it too."

"Like her heels? How curious!"

"No, no; like Babel. She can talk, so her mother says, five languages; *toute accomplie* she calls it—meaning, very accomplished."

"And has she been long accomplished? I mean is she still young, or a little what her mamma could call *passée*?"

"A good deal *passée*," said Mrs. Armytage, confidently. "You'll say so when you see her; and"—here she dropped her voice so that Ella shouldn't hear her—"you'll see a good deal of her. It's shocking, positively shocking, the way she dresses. 'Nothing'—as I once ventured to

tell her mother—"nothing, my dear madam, but abject poverty can excuse your daughter going about with so little on her." Drawings!"

Here the visitor's eye lit upon Ella's sketch. "Oh, how beautiful, and how like! It is certainly one of those two headlands; is it not, Miss Josceline?"

"Yes," said Ella, amused by this very moderate compliment to her artistic skill; "it is the one with the coastguard station on it; but I have not had time to put that in yet."

"I see. Rome was not built in a day, was it? Indeed, you've only had the morning. Mr. Felspar must see this."

"Who is Mr. Felspar?" inquired Mr. Josceline.

"Oh, an artist! he lodges in the village, but sometimes comes to dine at the *table-d'hôte*. A very unassuming person indeed, and of considerable talent. He must take your daughter's portrait; he took mine."

"And was it like?" inquired Mr. Josceline, regarding the original with the most unmistakable interest and admiration.

"I think it is," said Mrs. Armytage, modestly casting down her eyes. "The Professor thinks there is something wanting in the expression—a lack of dignity and command."

"He would miss that if it wasn't there," observed Mr. Josceline, gravely.

"Yes; Mr. Felspar has failed to catch the characteristics. He should, as I tell him, confine himself entirely to portrait painting. As it is, he does landscapes also; 'a Jack of all trades,' as I ventured to remind him, 'is master of none.' But his advice will doubtless be useful to you, Miss Ella—if I caught your name correctly, my dear," she added, turning to the young lady.

"My father calls me Ella," said the girl, significantly, and with the least tinge of a flush.

"Just so; it is a very pretty name, probably a family one. Is it not so?"

"No; it is not, madam!" returned Mr. Josceline, with a curtness that was almost ferocity. "None of my family have ever been so called before, even by their own relatives." His manner was at once frost and fire; and the sting of his last sentence would have been felt by most people like the lash of a dogwhip.

Mrs. Armytage, however, was even more mistress of herself than of other people. She would take no offence when not inclined to do so, even though you put it in her hand and doubled her fingers over it.

"Now, that's curious," she observed, quietly. "However, you may have plenty of Ellas among you yet; even the French Louises began somewhere. The names in families always interest me. Now, there's the Percival-Lotts—bride and bridegroom *we* think, but you will judge for yourself—nothing will ever persuade me that they have any right to that name."

"One has heard of Lott before, and also of Lott's wife," observed

Mr. Josceline, indifferently. He had by this time recovered his equanimity, but the effects of the storm were still apparent.

"It is not the Lott, my dear sir, it is the Percival with the hyphen that I object to ; he looks to me much more like a Peter."

"Permit me to remark, madam, that Peter has some claims to respectability—some persons would even say, to reverence."

"No doubt ; but not to aristocracy—that's the point. She's as close as wax, and very cunning. But I shall find out all about them some day, including the Percival. They try to pass themselves off as an old married couple, but Mrs. Jennynge swears she heard her ask her husband at breakfast whether he took cream and sugar. That's conclusive, you know."

"True ; unless, indeed, the gentleman's tastes were very changeable."

"Gentlemen's tastes don't change about those sort of things," observed Mrs. Armytage, with a drop in her voice and a significant contraction in her left eye ; "we know better than that."

Mr. Josceline bowed in acknowledgment of the confidence thus reposed in him, and also because he could not trust himself to speak ; the rapidity with which the lady made her advances tickled his very heartstrings.

"I saw a very nice-looking old couple in the garden, this morning," observed Ella—perceiving the necessity of relieving her father's embarrassment, though ignorant of its cause—"of the name, as I understand, of Wallace."

"Oh, you mustn't know *them* !" returned Mrs. Armytage, hastily ; "indeed, if you had not mentioned them, I should have ignored their existence. As the Professor would say, they don't move in the same plane with us at all."

"Dear me !" murmured Mr. Josceline ; "that's very clever of them. Have they an orbit of their own, then ?"

"I don't know about that," said Mrs. Armytage, doubtfully, and rather regretting that she had handled a scientific weapon even in the way of metaphor ; "they have a farm in Devonshire. He is always speaking depreciatingly about the Wallington cows."

"That looks as if he wanted to buy them," observed Mr. Josceline.

"Perhaps ; that is, I don't think so. They have come to recover themselves from a domestic loss."

"A cow ?"

"No, no ; a child. Of course they have a legal right to stay here, but it is very inconsiderate of them ; they have not been accustomed to society, and have not the art to conceal it. Mrs. Wallace told me that she had often churned butter with her own hands."

"That, again, was very clever of her," observed Mr. Josceline.

"Well, of course she used a machine ; but the idea of a lady churning butter !"

"I have done it," said Ella, simply. "We had a dairy at our school at Clapham, and we thought it the greatest treat to be allowed to churn."

"Oh, at Clapham!" answered Mrs. Armytage, shaking her head; "that's quite another thing."

"And so I dare say was the butter," remarked Mr. Josceline.

"Just so," continued his visitor, approvingly. "A young lady may do a thing to amuse herself, such as this drawing for instance; but she would never think of getting any money for it, one hopes."

"A very just observation, madam," observed Mr. Josceline, gravely.

"I certainly never thought of getting any money for that drawing," said Ella, good-naturedly; "and I am afraid no one would ever think of giving it."

"Of course not," said Mrs. Armytage; "that would be too ridiculous. It is only a man like Mr. Aird who does not see that; he says the sole difference between the amateur and the professional is that the work of one is inferior to that of the other. He told me once that a country gentleman was only a glorified gamekeeper; whereupon I ventured to remark that such opinions were revolutionary, and that he was an incendiary."

"And who is Mr. Aird?" inquired Mr. Josceline.

"An old Indian."

"Heavens? and, apparently, in his war paint."

"Nay; I mean a retired Indian civilian. He is said to have heaps and heaps of rupees."

"Indeed! Then I suppose he married a Begum."

"Very likely; in my opinion he would stick at nothing. He has got rid of her, however, somehow; he is a widower with but one child, and that's a spoilt one."

"Is he not very delicate?" inquired Ella. "I noticed a pretty but very fragile-looking boy looking out of the window of the dining-room when we arrived."

"That's him. Yes; he is fragile enough; no wonder, when he dines with grown-up people, and has a bottle of wine all to himself."

"How shocking!" exclaimed Ella. "What sort of wine?"

"Oh! I don't know; it puts one out of patience even to look at him; though, of course, it is his father's fault."

"And how old is this terrible gentleman?" inquired Mr. Josceline, carelessly.

"Seven—though he might be seventy, from his old-fashioned ways."

"I meant his father."

"Oh, he? well; I'm sure I don't know. He looks as brown and withered and (taking his manners into account) as rough as a what-do-you-call-'em?—things you have at dessert—a lychee."

"Lychees, however, are sweet inside," observed Ella.

"That's just what Mr. Vernon says: his notion is that ill health makes the man testy, but that he has a kind heart. But there, as I once ventured to tell him, 'Perhaps, Mr. Vernon, you want to get some of Mr. Aird's rupees; in which case you will be disappointed, since every single one of them will go to little Davey.'"

"That was very frank and like yourself," observed Mr. Josceline, with gentle approval; "but who is Mr. Vernon?"

"Oh! no one to speak of; a friend of Mr. Felspar, who lodges in the same house with him; a man of good birth and breeding, but who has thrown all the chances of life away and himself with it. You have known such cases yourself, I dare say, Mr. Josceline."

"Yes;" the word was snapped out sullenly, like the closing of a spring lock. To the ears of his visitor the tone seemed only to express contempt, in sympathy with her own, for all such ne'er-do-wells; but Ella knew that the conversation had somehow become distasteful to her father. As usual, therefore, she instantly came to his relief.

"What is it this Mr. Vernon has done which is so dreadful?" she inquired, pitifully. It was natural to her to feel pity for persons in misfortune, even when merited, rather than indignation and a desire for further penalties.

"Well; instead of entering a profession like every other young man in his position, the poor creature took to writing—writing stories."

"But if he didn't write other people's names on cheques," said Ella, laughing, "which would be a very wicked sort of story, why should he not? There is no harm in it."

"My dear young lady, of course there is no harm in it," said Mrs. Armytage, gravely—"that is, as an amusement; but, as I was just now remarking about painting (and had the happiness to find your father agreed with me), the calling of letters is not one to be undertaken seriously by—well, I don't say gentlemen, because I don't wish to be personal, and this young man (apart from his pursuit) is very presentable—by persons who have been born to better things. What do you say, Mr. Josceline?"

"My dear madam, it is unnecessary for me to say anything. You have expressed my own sentiments in the happiest manner. It must be conceded, however, that a man may do what he likes so long as he remains single. The evil is when a woman attempts to gain a position for herself by any other means save those which are in accordance with common usages and—and—the fitness of things. We shall have the pleasure of seeing you again at the *table-d'hôte*, I conclude?" for Mrs. Armytage had risen to go.

"Oh, certainly! Then I shall have the honour of introducing you to the Professor! He is ranging the hills just now in pursuit of the painted lady—a butterfly," she added in explanation, as Mr. Josceline slightly raised his eyebrows. "As for you, Miss Ella, with your papa's permission, I shall henceforth take you under my wing." And with a pleasant nod, that would have been somewhat familiar but that it was neutralised by a certain jutting and swan-like movement which characterised her on momentous occasions, Mrs. Armytage swam out of the room.

"A very remarkable woman," observed Mr. Josceline when the door had closed behind her.

"But, my dear papa," said Ella, hesitatingly, "she did not strike me as being—well—quite a lady."

"She didn't say she was, my dear, and we should never find fault where there is no pretence. I confined myself to saying she was remarkable; she is a woman of character, and has already been of the greatest use to us by giving us the *carte du pays*. You think it was wrong of me to suck her brains, and especially to lead her to believe she had made such a favourable impression on us? Yet she came here to suck ours, and to produce that very impression. Do you suppose she really came to give me a linseed poultice? You may take my word for it she has forgotten all about it; and, in that case, I am glad it *was* linseed, or we should, perhaps, have made acquaintance with it in the form of some '*entremet*' at the *table-d'hôte*."

To an Old Coat.

(FROM BÉRANGER.)

Poor coat, well loved for many reasons,
 Since both of us grow old, Be true;
 This hand has brushed you for ten seasons,
 E'en Socrates no more could do.
 Whilst Time your thin and white-seamed stuff
 Keeps on attacking without end,
 Wisely, like me, his blows rebuff;
 And never let us part, old friend.

That birthday flown, when first I wore you,
 I mind well—memory yet is strong—
 My friends around to honour bore you,
 And poured their welcome forth in song.
 Your shabby plight—of which I'm vain—
 Hinders them not an arm to lend,
 They'd freely feast us now again;
 So never let us part, old friend,

You're patched behind, an ancient rending;
That, too, recalls a past delight:
One night to run from Jane pretending,
I felt her soft hand clutch me tight.
Torn were you, and that frightful tear
It took my Jane two days to mend,
Whilst I was held her captive there;
So never let us part, old friend.

Have you been steeped in musk and amber,
Which fops sniff, looking in the glass?
Or pushed along an ante-chamber,
For swells to sneer at as we pass?
Throughout all France by faction rent,
Ribbons and stars fell strife can send—
A field-flower is *your* ornament;
So never let us part, old friend.

Fear no more days of idle ranging,
When our two fates became as one,
Of pleasure with pain interchanging,
Of intermingled rain and sun.
For the last time I soon shall doff
My clothes, just wait! and we will wend
Together, gently going off;
So never let us part, old friend.

F. DOYLE.

The Moral Element in Literature.*

I WAS reading the other day—if you will permit me to start with a brief personal reference—an article written by the finest of our living critics. Whilst following his remarks with complete sympathy, I was brought to a stand by finding myself cited as an advocate of a theory which the critic pronounced, very rightly, in my judgment, to be absurd. This theory, to put it briefly, was that the literary value of a great poet might be fairly estimated by the scientific value of his ethical teaching. Now it is my opinion that in the forum of literature it is a crime to be misunderstood and a folly to explain. If one's meaning is so badly expressed as to be unintelligible to a candid and acute critic, it must certainly be one's own fault; and the attempt to put oneself right by a mending and qualifying the original statement is only productive of intricate and wearisome wranglings. It is better to submit in silence to the implied rebuff, and try to speak more plainly the next time. Accordingly I only mention this little incident by way of introducing the remark that an attempt at such plain speaking may not be without interest. The question involved may briefly be stated thus: How far is our estimate of the moral worth of a writer relevant in forming a judgment of his æsthetic value? The principles which I shall attempt to lay down are very simple and commonplace. Happily that is pretty generally the case in regard to ethical problems. I have no ambition to be original in my views of morality; for I hold that the old doctrines as to what is right or wrong are, on the whole, remarkably sound. Still I have had to recognise the fact that one is liable to be misunderstood even in stating very simple theories; and, moreover, a good deal has been said by various schools of criticism which, to my thinking, tends rather to perplex the whole question. Certain humourists, for example, chose to maintain that there is no relation whatever between art and morality; which meant, it would seem, if it meant anything, that one might say that a man's writings were those of a beast and a blackguard without committing oneself to any opinion about their literary value. Offences to the moral sense were not to count, though all other instincts were to be respected. In reality, perhaps, it meant that the writer knew that he gave offence to the decent part of mankind, and that he did not care. This might pass for a congenial joke. When, however, the doctrine was seriously taken up by pedantic disciples, and converted into a sham philosophical canon, it gave rise to a good deal of wearisome cant,

* A lecture delivered at the London Institution, December 6, 1880.

which may be left to the tender mercies of contemporary satirists; and, on the other hand, some critics, who profess to take a high moral tone, often make tacit assumptions which would condemn every great writer from Æschylus to M. Victor Hugo. They would revive the old bigotry which banished all poets, playwrights, and novelists from the sphere of permitted reading, and sentence all future writers to wear a livery of respectable drab, and confine their energies to the production of tracts and sermons. Nothing, to my thinking—and, I fancy, to that of most people—could be in the long run less conducive to the morality which it was supposed to encourage.

I do not wish to wander into controversy. I would much rather start from opinions in which we can all agree; and I will begin by observing that there is one sense in which we may all agree to put the moralist out of court. We shall agree, that is, that the good old-fashioned practice of regarding a neat little moral as the final cause of every work of art, was, to say the least, unsatisfactory. An old dramatist, who is very fertile in such sentiments, may give us a sufficient example of the practice. "May we," he says, at the end of a tragedy, "make use of this great example, and learn from it that—

There cannot be a want of power above
To punish murder and unlawful love!"

This edifying truth is proved by the representation of a sinner brought to repentance by the appearance of his son's ghost, half naked and full of wounds, and leading in the shadow of a lady with a leprous face; after which, he has just time to confess his sin before being struck dead by a flash of lightning. It does not require any great logical acuteness to discover the weakness of the argument. To say nothing of the rarity of ghosts, the method of reasoning is clearly defective. The fact that a particular murder has come out does not prove the universal proposition "All murder will out." If neither murder nor discovery are facts, they cannot possibly prove anything; and, in any case, the moral objection to a crime is not that it will be found out, but that it is intrinsically pernicious. We can only smile at the *naïveté* of our ancestors who used to commend some very questionable works of art by tagging to them these quaint little morals; and we will abandon the practice to the writers of edifying tracts, with the advice that they should not use the expedient too freely. But more refined forms of the same fallacy still find favour with some writers; for what is called "the novel with a purpose" is not yet extinct, though it has been long exposed to a heavy fire of ridicule. We still have books which are outwardly fictions, but inwardly and substantially tracts in favour of a religious dogma, or pamphlets in support of a political theory. We find ourselves somehow tricked into an argumentative and statistical discussion; we resent the unfairness of the method, and are vexed at being balked of our proposed engagement. I don't know how many people in these days have ever tried to read Miss

Ma rtineau's *Illustrations of Political Economy*, or have suffered the annoyance of finding that a promising story of artisan life in the North is nothing but a covert exposition of the orthodox economical doctrine of the wages funds. That is a typical instance of the worst possible case of an unhallowed alliance between the artistic and scientific methods, which leads to the degradation of both, though we are almost cheated into admiration by the heroic audacity which tried to convert the "dismal science" into the raw material of romance. We may find illustrations of the principle more instructive in some ways, because the error is less palpably absurd, in some of Dickens' fictions. Take, for example, his assault upon the Circumlocution Office, which purports to be the translation into fiction of some of Mr. Carlyle's eloquent denunciations of red tape, and of "the miserable creatures having the honour to be." Let us take for granted that Dickens was perfectly right in his doctrine; let us admit, too, that it is a perfectly legitimate end of fiction to give the most graphic picture possible of varying phases of social life. Dickens was as fully justified in describing the English governing classes as Scott, for example, in giving his inimitable types of Scotch peasantry, or Balzac in portraying the corrupt society which flourished in the Paris of his day. Nobody, we may again admit, could read Scott without understanding better than he would do from many volumes of political philosophy what was the real strength and weakness of Scott's countrymen; nor, again, is it possible to become acquainted with Rastignac or the Père Goriot without learning a great deal as to the sources of political weakness under the old *régime* in France. Both Scott and Balzac, and Dickens himself, when he was discharging his proper function, threw much light upon facts which every statesman should take into account. But when the novelist tries to invade the province of the statesman, and is really writing in order to justify some pet theory, he makes the blunder which deprives this part of Dickens of all serious value. It is thoroughly unsatisfactory artistically, because we feel that the personages whom he holds up to ridicule are caricatures—absurd and impossible beings, who can reveal nothing to us because they never existed. The British official may be as blundering and pedantic as you please; but he is, at any rate, a human being, a creature with intellect and affections like our own: if you prick him, he will bleed; if you tickle him, he will laugh. And the really great artist cannot help remembering this, and therefore making you understand his Shylock even when he is intending to make him thoroughly hateful. That was just the kind of self-restraint of which Dickens was incapable, and which therefore leads him to paint mere monsters as unlike any possible human being as the figures which Gillray and Rowlandson put to represent Napoleon or Pitt. And, of course, the same fault is as injurious in a logical sense; for the real problem is (assuming the accuracy of the facts) how does it come to pass that honourable and intelligent men, such as we know many English officials to be, come to make such a mess of it? And Dickens, when he

once permits himself to describe them as being not men at all, but mere puppets pulled by the satirist's wires, virtually leaves the problem altogether unanswered. He utters a shrill scream of impatience, instead of giving us a fair diagnosis of the social disease; and therefore you can learn incomparably more from writers who had no thought of any political doctrine at all, but who were simply anxious to paint men as they saw them.

Hence we may, I think, define the objection to such work a little more accurately. It implies a confusion of functions. An astronomical diagram is a very good thing in its place, and so is a picture of the heavenly bodies; but if you try to put either in the place of the other, or to combine the two in one, you are pretty certain to make a disastrous muddle of the result. The novelist, as Fielding often tells us, is the true historian of the time. He tries to show us, as clearly as his powers allow, the real moving forces in the great tragi-comedy of human life. He has to make the world intelligible to us, and the deeper and truer his insight, the greater his permanent power. So far his attitude is the same as that of the scientific observer or the philosophic reasoner. And this—without going further for the moment—is enough to condemn the disguised pamphlets which are called novels with a purpose. For purpose of this kind is inconsistent with that spontaneity which is the most obvious and essential condition of artistic success. There is, as we are rightly told, only one sufficient excuse for writing poetry—the fact, namely, that you cannot help it. The poet should be under an overmastering impulse which compels him to seek relief in utterance, and, for the moment at least, he should be under no other impulse. He should speak because his heart burns within him, and because, whilst he keeps silence, it is pain and grief to him. That is the test of genuine inspiration, and his art consists in such a selection and combination of his materials as can present his ideas in the most effective and striking form. But so soon as he is writing with a purpose—to advocate female suffrage or a better observance of the Sabbath, or a change in our administrative system—he is narrowing and lowering his aim. He is forced by the conditions of his art to give us a story of the lives and fortunes of concrete human beings. He should lay bare—as far as he can—the true play of passion, make intelligible the development of character, and invite our tears and smiles by our interest in his typical characters. The main interest of any real study of life can never consist in its bearing upon some particular political problem. And so far as we feel that the writer's interest is really in that minor problem and not in the deeper and more permanent interests involved, we feel also that the true centre of interest is displaced. The author has created his characters, not because he was interested in them, or in his fellows generally, but because he was interested about some pet crotchet of his own. He is really manufacturing evidence for an imaginary blue-book, or trying to insinuate into us a belief in a table of statistical information. The true centre of interest is, in his mind,

the least interesting part of the work, and therefore fails to interest us. And, of course, characters manufactured for such a purpose, and in the interests of a collateral theory, tend to become mere caricatures, for that which is incidental is exaggerated at the cost of that which is really essential.

The conclusion, then, is that a poet should not have the same purpose as the politician or the economist, but certainly not that he should have no purpose. To have no purpose is simply not to be a reasoning being. Every man must of necessity have some purpose in his actions. Even the poet—if I may say so—may rightly aim at making a little money by his poetry. If he writes simply with a view to making money, his poetry will probably be worthless; but, like other men, he has to live, to pay his bills, and to support his family; and he ought to consider whether he is justified by those circumstances in yielding to or in cultivating the poetic impulse. And, still more, he may certainly consider whether on the whole his poetry is likely to be at least harmless to the world. When a man has composed his epic poem, the question always arises whether it would not be wise to put it in the fire; and that question, I need hardly say, is generally decided in the wrong way. All that we mean, therefore, by objecting to a purpose is that in the art of composition a man's whole purpose should be to utter his assertions in the most perfect and vigorous way possible, and not the attainment of any special practical aim. And this condition follows from the very nature of the performance; for, in truth, a genuine work of art can be no more limited to any such particular end than a history of real facts. It is as absurd to ask what is the moral of *Faust* or *Hamlet* as to ask what is the moral of the history of Napoleon. That is not because there is no moral, but because there are infinite morals. The politician, the moralist, the physiologist, and so forth, will each find their own moral in the story of Napoleon, according to the special point of view from which they regard it. The historian must give the facts as fully and impartially, and leave it to others to apply the innumerable morals with which the facts are pregnant; and so far as he descends from that level he becomes, like too many historians, a mere party pamphleteer. If he discharges his duty worthily, he is stating facts which may be of the most critical importance in deciding the value of specific theories, but it is not his duty to write from the point of view of any such particular theory. The imaginative writer is so far in the same position, and if he does not deal with the facts of a real history, and therefore does not in the same way supply materials to the scientific reasoner, he has a prerogative of a different kind. He "proves" nothing, you say, and yet in another sense he proves a great deal, and even proves it to demonstration. He proves, and proves beyond a doubt, that certain modes of feeling or types of character are beautiful or hideous. *Paradise Lost*, as the proverbial senior wrangler remarked, proved nothing: that is, it did not prove the truth of Milton's cosmogony or of his peculiar doctrines about predestination. Clearly not, but it did prove beyond cavil the grandeur of certain

great moral conceptions, and the strength which a great intellect might draw from certain religious beliefs. And so, to take a lower instance, it is quite true that Addison, for example, did not prove the value of a particular set of political institutions when he drew "Sir Roger de Coverley," but he did show what a charm might be found in the character of a simple-minded and kindly squire under the old *régime*. This would certainly not show that the contemporary system of county franchise was right or wrong, but it revealed certain social truths which any statesman bent upon reform would do well to take into account.

This, it is easy to observe, is rather a strained use of the word "proof." I admit the plausibility of the criticism, and I will not go into metaphysical inquiries to ask whether the use of the word be legitimate. At any rate it may illustrate the legitimate function of the imaginative writer in regard to such truths. He reveals to us certain aspects of the world in which we live and the men who live in it. If these revelations can be called proofs, they must be considered as proofs which do not proceed beyond the truths capable of being proved by direct intuition. He shows us certain facts as they appear to him. If we are so constituted as to be unable to see what he sees, he can go no further. He cannot proceed to argue and analyse, and apply an elaborate logical apparatus. There is the truth, and we must make what we can of it. But, on the other hand, so far as we are in sympathy with him, the proof—if it be a proof—has all the cogency of direct vision. He has couched our dull eyes, drawn back the veil which hid from us the certain aspect of the world, and henceforward our views of life and the world will be more or less changed, because the bare scaffolding of fact which we previously saw will now be seen in the light of keener perceptions than our own.

And now, to come a little nearer to our special problem, we must ask in what sense and how far the value of this artistic revelation may be dependent upon the moral qualities of the seer? and I shall suggest the answer which I consider to be the most satisfactory by answering a preliminary question. As we have not time for roundabout approaches according to the rules of logical strategy, I shall venture to answer it dogmatically. To me, at least, it seems that literature may be sufficiently regarded as simply one form of personal intercourse. It is a subordinate question whether I know a man through his books, or hear him discourse to me *vivâ voce*, or talk to him in ordinary society; the only difference is, that in a man's books, if they are good for anything, I expect to have the highest part of the man: the refined essence of his thoughts, and his most confidential communications. In talking to a man at a dinner-party I am distracted by considerations as to the way in which he parts his hair or uses his knife and fork, or am treated to an exposition of his views upon the relative merits of hock and claret. It would be prudish to deny that such topics are often exceedingly interesting. But even at a dinner-party I desire more than this, and in either mode of intercourse, the higher and the lower, I am equally putting myself within

the sphere of that indefinable personal influence which acts in a thousand subtle and inexplicable ways, and more by direct sympathy or antipathy than by producing any tangible and calculable effect. To sum up the influence and to analyse its modes of operation, is simply impossible. When I know a man, especially if he attracts my love or reverence, I am influenced, or, in other words, my whole character is more or less modified. I have breathed a new intellectual atmosphere, and my constitution is affected by the materials which I have unconsciously assimilated. I may, of course, treat a man as I treat a book of reference; that is, I may simply acquire from him a certain amount of definite information—true or false; I may, again, treat him as I treat a scientific treatise—that is, I may argue with him till I am more thoroughly persuaded of the truth of my own opinions. The man who affects me in such ways is so far useful or the reverse, and I probably consider him, to use the irreverent phrase, as a mere “book in breeches.” The phrase is irreverent, because a book does something more, and that something corresponds to the other kind of personal power, which, generally speaking, is of incomparably greater importance. When we have summed up all the facts and arguments which a teacher has transferred into our minds, we have only accounted for the lowest part of his influence, and it is the part beyond all others which corresponds to the true teaching of a great imaginative intellect. We learn much more even from a philosopher by our sympathy with his modes of thinking and feeling than from the particular formulæ which he inculcates; and in the case of a great poet, this kind of influence is the essential and all-important.

The influence is just the same, I will observe in passing, whether the teacher belongs to what is called the objective or subjective class. It is the man Shakspeare who really influences us in reading *Hamlet* and *Othello*, and not the less because critics generally repeat the assertion that we know very little of a man who retires so carefully behind his characters. We have, it is true, next to nothing of the kind of information about Shakspeare which Boswell gave us about Johnson. But surely we know a good deal about a man if we know only this—that he is capable of sympathising impartially with a vast variety of characters; and, in some very important respects, it seems to me that we know even more of Shakspeare than of Johnson. If we know less of his domestic relations and his taste in cookery, we know what he felt and thought about some of the most profoundly interesting of all the problems of life. But, whether we have or have not framed any theory as to Shakspeare’s personality, and have or have not constructed a theory of the man from his books, it is not the less the man who really influences us. For what really impresses us in Shakspeare, or in any great writer, is the extraordinary force and vividness with which he has embodied certain general truths and deep emotions; and his power of achieving that feat clearly depended upon his own emotional and intellectual temperament. The

nature of the influence is not the less clear that it acts as from behind a cloud.

The ultimate nature of any personal influence is, I say, beyond our feeble powers of analysis. It must, of course, always depend partly upon our personal idiosyncrasy: we like or hate Dr. Fell without being able to say why. But so far as it is independent of such variable fancies, so far as your great men are able to influence men in all ages and countries, we should say in very general terms that the influence depends upon a man's total power, upon his intellectual and emotional vigour, upon the strength of his passions, the clearness of his reason, the delicacy of his perceptions, the general harmony of faculties so co-ordinated and correlated as to give unity and consistency to his whole life and character. Briefly, the man is greater so far as he corresponds to the highest type of man conceivable, or represents the very utmost that can be got out of human flesh and blood. This is the standard—vague enough, in all conscience—by which we measure the magnitude of the great luminaries of the intellectual heavens. But we cannot take any narrower standard, and indefinite as it is, it is clear enough to suggest some obvious inferences. For we may notice, in the first place, that if by morality you mean spontaneous obedience to a certain code of rules—a dislike to lying, stealing, drunkenness, and so forth, the possession of any such qualities is an utterly inadequate measure of a man's total excellence. Some of the best, nay, some of the most attractive men I have ever known, have been specimens of the great class, dunce. Stupidity does not necessarily imply wickedness. I have known a man to whom the Latin grammar was an impenetrable jungle of insurmountable difficulties, who was yet one of the purest, the kindest, and most loveable of human beings. Considering how many men, according to high authority, fall under the description fool, it is happy that we need not therefore set them down as knaves. And, conversely, I have known some most brilliant and fascinating companions whom I would not trust unreservedly with my spoons, and whom, perhaps, I should introduce with some scruple to the more delicately-minded part of the species. For all this, I prefer to have for a friend—specially for a friend who is to influence my character—a man with two or more ideas in his head, and, if possible, I should like to feel that I might leave him alone in my library or my cellar without having afterwards to count my books or my bottles.

Now, as I have said, I measure the worth of a book by the worth of the friend whom it reveals to me. And, putting aside the personal affinities which may determine us to love one man better than another without affecting our estimate of his intrinsic value, I further say that the worth of the author is in proportion to his whole intellectual force. Physicists compare machines in respect of the amount of energy stored up in them, or, as they say, by the number of foot-pounds of work done. There is no such thing as a spiritual foot-pound. If there were, it might give us a measure. As there is not, I can only say vaguely that the

value of a great writer is measured by the amount of energy which he represents and by the vigour of his impact upon the world of thought. That is to say, again, it is proportioned to his strength, remembering that in this sense delicacy is itself a form of strength; for the clumsiness which wastes power is as prejudicial as the weakness which implies absolute defect of power. What, then, has become of the moral test? Simply this, I imagine. Without going into disputed ethical questions, we may adopt the old and profound conception, according to which morality may be regarded as being a kind of health; or, if you will, as being in the sphere of thought and feeling what health is in the material sphere. Morality is not coincident with health in this sense of the word, for there are many defects and shortcomings of the spiritual nature which do not imply immorality. But the converse remains true. To say that a man is immoral is so far to say that he is in some way spiritually diseased; that his mental and material organisation is somehow out of joint; that some of his instincts are defective or perverted, and therefore that the vital functions are not being properly discharged. And therefore, as every disease is so far a source of weakness or deficient vitality, this is pre-eminently true of those diseases of which the external symptom is immorality. Or, taking the opposite case, what we call a fine moral sense is a proof that the whole organisation is working soundly and is in the highest condition of intellectual training.

Thus, to start from this analogy, I admire an athlete primarily and simply for his strength and agility, for the ease with which he can perform any given feat, and for the force which he can apply to achieve a great labour. I may not even ask whether he is or is not healthy, but I admire him for performances of which thorough bodily health is an essential condition. The man may be diseased in some way which does not affect his particular performance; or he may be thoroughly healthy and yet unable to achieve any considerable feat; or, again, his very strength in particular directions may lead to the development of morbid states. Still nobody would deny that a thoroughly healthy state of body is the normal and most essential condition of athletic excellence. And just the same things may be said of what we call spiritual and intellectual health; though the complexity and uncertainty of that irritating compound, known as human nature, often leads to still more anomalous results in the higher sphere. So, for example, a man may, as I have said, be stupid and yet thoroughly healthy in mind. Health is not a sufficient, though it is generally a necessary condition of excellence. Or he may combine the most admirable powers in some directions with debasing and shameful because morbid instincts in other directions. He may be a subtle logician and yet thoroughly heartless. If so, he may write an excellent treatise upon formal logic, though he will probably be a bad poet. In any case, his heartlessness is so far a defect and a source of weakness as well as of immorality. Or, again, it is so

common a case that some people regard it as the normal case, that great powers of a certain kind predispose a man to certain intellectual diseases. This I believe to be true and important, in a sense. I can only say at present that, so far as the disease exists, it is always a source of weakness, and that the highest powers of any kind are perfectly compatible with, and indeed can only be fully developed in association with the highest conceivable health. So, to take an obvious case, Cowper's extreme sensibility made him a poet and helped to drive him mad. Still, as far as it drove him mad, it distorted his perceptions and marred his poetry. Some great men have been as sensitive as Cowper, and yet have been thoroughly good men of business as well as men of genius. That genius has its special dangers is a doctrine which I am certainly not inclined to dispute; but until you can prove—what is to my mind the very reverse of the truth—that it essentially implies disease, we may still hold the doctrine which I take to lie at the foundation of all sound doctrine upon this subject, that the highest powers can only reach their fullest development in a thoroughly healthy organism, using health in the widest possible sense, which therefore includes moral health. It may be as well to illustrate the application of this theory to our particular problem by some of the most familiar cases.

In the first place, there is a wide sphere of literary art to which moral doctrines have no direct application. It is sometimes asked, for example, what has morality to do with such poems as Coleridge's *Christabel* and *Kubla Khan*, or Keats's *Hyperion*, or Milton's *Lycidas*? They are admirable because they are the utterances of nobly endowed natures, implying marvellous richness of emotion, delicate perception of all the harmonies of language, command of all the resources of poetic association, and so forth. But it would be as idle to talk of the moral of such poems as to ask for the moral of a magnificent piece of music. To all this I fully agree, and I will add that such work could only be condemned by those who think—as some great men have thought—that in a world where so much evil has to be encountered, all purely æsthetic indulgence should be forbidden. This is virtually to hold that morality is not only good, but the sole good. As to my mind, it is truer to say that morality is ultimately admirable because it is a condition of happiness, than to reverse the order of thought, I certainly do not share this theory. I hold, on the contrary, the commonplace doctrine that everything which makes the world brighter and more beautiful is so far a good thing, and that all innocent enjoyment should be encouraged. And, therefore, the only question which the moralist has to ask is whether the enjoyment is in fact innocent. It is innocent, again, if it does not imply any morbid sentiment. We may, therefore, say that morality has a certain negative relation to such work, in so far as it is true that the great poets in question do not appeal to any degrading emotions. When Coleridge wrote *Kubla Khan*, he was thinking as little of morality, in the ordinary sense of the word, as he was thinking of mathematics and

political economy. We can only say that a man of impure mind might possibly have introduced into such a poem something which would have jarred upon the moral sense. But this, in such a question, is a rather far-fetched and remote consideration. It is more relevant in regard to another great class of poetry, which will probably last as long as the world continues. It is applicable to any of the innumerable singers who have "panted forth a flood of rapture," more or less "divine," "in praise of love and wine." A critic must belong to a very ascetic school of morality indeed who would condemn such poetry as immoral; and, for my part, I sincerely hope that young men and young women will go on falling in love with each other for a considerable time to come, and will be always making the fresh discovery that "love" rhymes to "dove," and making use of it in the composition of a quantity of verses, the vast majority of which, I must also hope, will find a speedy euthanasia. I only say that such poetry is admirable in proportion to the strength, sincerity, and nobility of the passion. That which makes a Burns, for example, incomparably superior as a writer of love-songs to such a sparkling versifier as Tom Moore, is the masculine force of intellect and emotion which they display. But we may add that the poetry is the finer, as it implies a chivalrous and pure-minded passion, and a width of tender sympathy with all human feeling, and that vice manifests itself by narrowing and lowering the range of sentiment as well as by giving a coarser form to the utterance. The æsthetic judgment includes far more than the strictly moral judgment; but the moral judgment coincides, so far as it goes, with the æsthetic.

Hence, briefly speaking, poetry is great as it is the utterance of the loftiest and most richly endowed natures; as it is such as no one could have written unless he had been a man of high character and delicate feeling, and can impregnate his work with the magical attraction which is only derivable from contact with such men. The poet, like the man, is lower in rank, so far as he is wanting in sincerity, and therefore puts us off with sham conventional phrases; or wanting in purity of feeling, and therefore incapable of appreciating the purest essences of character; or in tenderness of heart and quickness of sympathy, and therefore incapable of exercising that potent and yet lenient sway over our affections in which Johnson rightly found the ultimate secret of Goldsmith's literary excellence. Goldsmith's power, you may retort, was not due to the goodness of his heart, but to the fineness of his workmanship and the perfection of his powers of expression. That, I think, is about as reasonable as to say that a great painter owes his power not to his eye for colour, but to the merit of his technical execution. No doubt, the technical instrument is essential to the artist, but it is useless unless it has something to express. And the fineness of Goldsmith's literary execution was merely one aspect of a delicate organisation which included an emotional as well as an intellectual subtlety. The two powers are but different applications of the same quality. Literary work may be as

clever as you please, and unite the highest admiration of the authorised critics of such qualities; but that which gives it charm, and makes it capable of reaching the hearts of mankind, is the underlying tenderness and delicacy of the emotional sentiment.

This could hardly be better illustrated than by the famous controversy in which—as we all remember from Macaulay's brilliant article—the High-Church parson Collier triumphed over all the wits and poets of his day. The arguments used by Collier and his supporters were often crude enough. They naturally provoked a protest from such critics, for example, as Lamb and Hazlitt, who enjoyed Congreve's or Wycherley's wit, and did not like to be called immoral for their taste. Lamb's familiar argument in defence of the dramatists has its value against some such criticisms. The Mirabels, and Witwoulds, and Manlys, he urged, lived in such a fictitious world that it was sheer pedantry to judge of them by moral rules. If they made a mock of marriage, for example, we are always to remember that they did not really exist and were therefore laughing at a law not applicable to imaginary beings. We may agree, for the sake of argument, that the theory might hold water in regard to some imaginary worlds. Mere sylphs and gnomes, even if they choose to masquerade in everyday costumes, are not held to respect our observances. But the argument seems to me at least to fail curiously as applied to these dramatists. My objection to them is precisely that the world which they represent is a great deal too real. Very odd things happen in it, it is true; impossible conglomerations of intrigue combined to bring the characters into collision, and to strike out of them the greatest possible number of witty repartees. But the world is essentially the prosaic world of the selfish, cynical, unprincipled men about town of the day. Its inhabitants are wittier than any real beings; but the substance of their wit is simply the coarse and brutal sentiment which was likely to find favour with the rakes of the coffee-houses. The world is idealised not by omitting the prose, but by leaving out the poetry. Congreve was writing to amuse ladies who had just enough modesty to wear masks at his plays, and fine gentlemen who staggered into the theatre with brains just sufficiently clear to appreciate their own sentiments put into smart language. He was bound to say nothing which would fly over the heads of such an audience or to cause them to blush for the only thing which would make them blush, the accidental blundering into a really generous or romantic sentiment. Of course I do not deny that Congreve shows both wit and sense; I do not think that he could fairly be called a blackguard, a phrase which is certainly applicable to Wycherley; and I will admit that I can find pleasure even in some of Wycherley's blackguardly writings; for, after all, the shrewd sense of a keen man of the world, though it may not be elevating, is not despicable. It is an element in human life with which we have to reckon, and if you pay more attention to the point with which a sentiment is given, than to the value of the sentiment itself, you may admire without reserve. But that which is wanting in all such

works is charm, the charm of chivalrous feeling, of hearty laughter, of sympathetic good nature, of interest in simple human passion. Where that is absent the connoisseur will never be able to force his creed upon the simple-minded reader, and will vainly try to excuse himself by lamentations over the deficient taste of the poor Philistine for pure literature.

In this matter I hold that the average reader is entirely in the right. He does not care for Congreve, because no brilliance of phrase will atone for intrinsic poverty of thought and meanness of sentiment. But I do not mean to say that your uncritical reader is always right in these matters. We all know for example that the respectable public was shocked by Byron's immorality, and, indeed, is still apt to express itself pretty strongly about such works as *Don Juan*. We are in a position, it is to be hoped, to judge more calmly, and our first remark would probably be, that the offence given by Byron was in part due to an irreverence which is not really what it seems. It is amusing, for example, to compare Byron's *Vision of Judgment* with the poem of the respectable Southey which it burlesqued. Southey set down Byron as Satanic, and undoubtedly Byron deals pretty freely with some of the objects of Southey's reverence. But if you ask which of the two poems is really the more irreverent, there cannot be a doubt that Southey is the real offender. For Southey's quiet identification of the divine element in the universe with poor old George III. and his ministers, his calm assumption that he has a right to speak as the authorised mouthpiece of Providence, and the familiarity which he displays with its counsels, are certainly incomparably more offensive to any reverent mind than Byron's scornful onslaught upon all the respectabilities, and his thorough conviction that many kings and statesmen stripped of their robes and their wigs will appear to be very miserable human beings. Southey, in short, is respectful to the outside shams, whilst Byron's mockery, if it shocks the worshippers of the symbols, is really far more respectful to the realities which the symbols represent. If, however, we should try to generalise this remark, and unreservedly claim moral elevation for Byron, we should be undertaking a rather difficult piece of literary whitewashing. Without trying to sum up a controversy still undecided, I will say what is in my view the true criterion. We admire Byron not primarily as a moralist, nor the reverse, but simply as a man of splendid force of mind and character, as one endowed with a thoroughly masculine intellect, of intense passions and generous sympathies, capable of tearing to pieces the flimsy sophistries and sham conventionalities in which the respectable people of his time had enveloped themselves, and breaking to pieces the fetters which they wished to impose upon human nature. That is the nobler Byron. And, if you ask, what limits our admiration, it is that there was another and baser Byron. His literary eminence has, I should say, two great drawbacks. The first is the insincerity, the affectation, the snobbishness, the hungering and thirsting for the praises of the very men whom he affected to despise,

the petty delight in the lower kinds of notoriety which marred his life, and shows itself equally in the utter unreality of much of his poetic declamation. The other great fault is the coarseness of nature which makes him an ignoble figure beside Shelley, to whom, in sheer force of intellect, he was greatly superior, and which gives to his assaults upon cant and hypocrisy the lower tone of the mere sensualist, when we require the tone of the generous advocate of human rights. The Colossus, as every one feels, is of iron mixed with clay, and the earthy part of the man is at times unpleasantly predominant. So far, therefore, from admitting that we can separate our moral judgment of the man from our literary judgment of the author, they seem to me to be identical; though, happily, the poetry is less stained than the life by his baser qualities. I admire Byron both as man and poet, so far as he represents the revolt of a nature of magnificent strength against cant and hypocrisy and sham morality, against loyalty which has become mere servility, and patriotism which implies indifference to the welfare of mankind, or a servile worship of military glory, against a conservatism which represents only the selfish fears and interests of the comfortable, and a religion which has sunk to be mere bigotry and a cowardly dread of intellectual freedom. I cease to respect him in either character when he becomes a mere dandy and lady-killer, as he bids for cheap admiration by insincere cant, or by pandering to the more debasing passions. I can pardon, perhaps, I can enjoy, buffoonery when it is aimed at mere prudery and the pedantry of the self-styled virtuous: I can respect even the cynicism which is the bitterness of a noble nature tortured by disappointment and remorse. But so far as these tendencies show blunted perceptions and incapacity for appreciating the ennobling elements in human life, they are as objectionable in the poet as in the man.

And this may suggest a remark upon one commonplace of modern criticism. The literary equivalent of moral degradation is blunted feeling; the loss of the delicate perception which enables a man to distinguish between exalted passion and brutish appetite, and disqualifies him from dealing with the highest problems of human nature, as a deficient sense of colour would disqualify a man for painting a sunset, or a lovely complexion. This gives the true meaning, I think, of the modern complaints about what is called sensationalism. It is, indeed, a curiosity of criticism that the same people who profess an idolatrous veneration for Shakspeare complain of any modern writer for dealing with the passions which supply the motive of *Othello* or *Hamlet*. We profess to admire the Elizabethan dramatists who sometimes kill so many of their characters that they scarcely leave enough actors standing to carry off the dead bodies, and yet I have seen the morality of Dickens compared with that of Scott by counting the number of murders in two of their novels. Sensationalism is the name of a bad quality, not so far as it indicates that a writer takes into account the crimes and horrors, and evil passions of our time; but so far as it means that he deals with them as the man of blunted

feeling deals with them ; that is to say, as he makes the sense of raw, undisguised horror supply his own want of sentiment. When poor Edgar Poe, a man undoubtedly of some rare and fine qualities, had to write with exhausted faculties, he had recourse to a very simple expedient. He introduced a decaying dead body, or a whole shipful of bodies. That is, he could not appeal to your sympathies, but he could turn your stomach. Devices of this kind imply not power, but the absence of power. Anybody can be impressive in this way, and the most commonplace newspaper reporter might find, within a mile of this place, materials enough for exciting a deeper sense of horror and disgust than any which could be produced by Shakspeare. The true inference, however, is not that a great writer is never to deal with such materials as excite pity or horror. In a world where good and evil are so intricately blended, where we have so many causes for sorrow and sympathy, the greatest men will be most profoundly sensitive to the sadness of the world, and will often set before us the darker and more terrible phases of human nature. But the real interest, so far as it is truly artistic in nature, is not that aspect of the horrible which is visible to every commonplace observer, but the thoughts and feelings which it excites in the great mind and the noble nature. Even in the most purely dramatic representation, the dramatist is, as I have said, really present, and without obtruding himself, is really teaching us how to look at the dark side of the world. He descends to be a mere sensationalist whenever the interest is derived purely from the objects which he describes and not from the light cast upon them by his intellect. And, therefore, a tendency to deal in the purely disgusting, in representing objects so hideous in themselves that they overpower any attempt at artistic treatment, is generally a proof of the presence of a baser element in the describer.

I will not here try to develop this consideration, or to apply it to certain recent developments of the realistic, or naturalistic school, as it is called. I may just remark that a man may conceivably deal even with the disgusting without being therefore simply immoral ; for he may deal with it so as to excite our disgust. But I think that the practice is dangerous, in so far as the disgust is very apt to be reflected upon the writer ; and for the stronger reason that such a method panders to the morbid sentiment, which unfortunately exists as a fact, and which induces men to take a degrading pleasure in the hideous for its own sake. The writer appeals to the brute within us, which has not been quite suppressed by the growth of civilisation. But I am anxious to conclude by one other remark.

I have really dealt with only half the subject. I have asked how far a writer's moral qualities affect the value of his work ; but the effect depends as much upon the reader as upon the writer. A man may study the art of medicine to learn how to concoct poisons, or how to stupefy himself with unwholesome opiates ; and a reader may extract poisonous material from writings which produce a very wholesome effect

upon a healthy mind ; or, again, he may read very vicious writing and derive from it only a greater hatred of vice. The problem, therefore, as to the intrinsic merit of literary work should be followed by an inquiry as to the right means of using literature. This inquiry is part of the general theory of education, using that word in the widest possible sense. Here I can only suggest a brief hint as to the bearing of the principles stated.

The true service which any great writer renders to his age is not to be summed up by calculating the amount of information, as to facts, or the number of verifiable theories which he has propounded. He is great so far as he has been the mouthpiece through which some new and fruitful idea has been added to the general current of thought. If he be a philosopher, or a man of science, he is great so far as he has revealed new and efficient methods of inquiry, and applied a stimulus to our intellectual activity. If a poet, he is great so far as he has set before us some impressive ideal of life, or found utterance for the deepest emotions of his contemporaries. The stimulus received from a great mind acts in countless indirect ways, and produces an intellectual ferment which may lead to results entirely unforeseen by him, and possibly very different from those which he would have approved. Now, it is undoubtedly a matter of great importance to every one capable of intellectual interests that he should bring himself into frequent and close contact with the great men of all times, and especially with the great men of our own time ; for if such men are uttering old truths they are yet bringing out those aspects, and clothing them in those forms, which are most important at the present day. Nobody, I need hardly say, can appreciate the great issues of the time, or sympathise with the great currents of thought, who has not been more or less at home with the writings of such men as Mr. Carlyle, or Cardinal Newman, or J. S. Mill, or Mr. Darwin, or Mr. Tennyson, or Mr. Browning—I will mention no one whose name could excite a controversy. And the service which such men render is not that they impress upon us some specific moral axiom, or that they provide us with additional arguments against stealing, lying, or drunkenness ; but that they rouse, excite, and elevate our whole natures—set us thinking, and therefore enable us to escape from the fetters of ancient prejudice and worn-out platitude, or make us perceive beauty in external nature, or set before us new ideals of life, to which we should otherwise have been indifferent. But we have to co-operate in the result, if it is to be of any real value. We are not to be passive buckets to be pumped into, as Mr. Carlyle puts it, mere receptacles for ready-made ideas, but fellow-creatures capable of being roused into independent activity. Now, in this sense, it is difficult to say where a man may not find some valuable matter. An active-minded man should be awake to all the interests of the day, and should find food for thought everywhere ; he may learn something even from the flippant leading article in which a youth fresh from college puts all the philosophers and statesmen of the day in their

proper places of due subordination to his own theories ; he may even learn something as to the ways of thought and feeling of his neighbours from novels of the vapid and sentimental, or purely silly order, or from that kind of literature—if it deserves the name—which is devoted to mere tittle-tattle, or personal scandal ; or again, even from some realistic representations of ugly things, which are sometimes called immoral, because they describe those dark places in society, which we have agreed not to mention, but which may incidentally be useful, in so far as they show how hideous such things really are. I am often half inclined to think that the next best thing to a good book is a bad book ; for, after all, the one hopeless evil is stagnation of mind. The question, however, what will do a man harm or good depends very much upon his own constitution. And it would be mere pedantry to insist upon any one's confining himself to the higher and severer class of literature—to say that he is never to condescend to amuse himself with mere trifles, or to condescend to take an interest in contemporary gossip ; or what would become of half the literary craftsmen of the day ? All, then, that is to be said is this : that to get from literature the best that can be got from it, to use books as instruments for developing our whole natures, the true secret is to select our friends judiciously ; to become as intimate as possible with some of the greatest thinkers of mankind, and to study the works of some great minds until we have been saturated with their influence, and have assimilated and made part of ourselves the sentiments which they express most vigorously. To study literature is not merely (as has been said) to know what has been best said by the greatest men, but to learn to know those men themselves. In so doing, the particular moral doctrines which they inculcate, or the effect upon our moral nature of their teaching, is only a part of the whole influence. But still it is a part of no small importance ; and the condition upon which a man is able to exert such influence is a profound interest in those ideas with which purely ethical teaching is strictly bound up ; and, moreover, a capacity for feeling rightly and vigorously upon ethical questions. In that sense, it is impossible ever really to exclude moral considerations from æsthetical judgments ; though it is easy to misapply them, or to overlook the importance of other aspects of a man's total influence. To make a poet into a simple moralist—a teacher of a certain definite code of ethics, is to put him into a wrong place, and judge him implicitly by an inappropriate criterion ; but it is equally true that he can only be deprived of moral quality if he takes no interest in the profoundest and most comprehensive topics of human thought and faith ; and in so far as he has a moral quality, it is desirable that it should be of the loftiest and purest kind obtainable.

Vagabondage and Pedestrianism.

(FOR PROFIT AND PLEASURE.)

WE doubt whether the doom of the Wandering Jew was altogether so deplorable as the legend would have it. On the contrary, we are strongly disposed to believe that in the retribution exacted for his sin, judgment was tempered with mercy. Eugène Sue, in the prologue to his long-winded romance, has a thrilling picture of the ill-fated Hebrew striding up to the European side of Behring's Straits, and waving his hands to a female companion in misfortune, who had dropped upon her knees on the shores of Alaska, the eloquent embodiment of sympathetic despair. Unquestionably the remorseful outcast must have had his moods of depression, and we can conceive that his horizon seemed enveloped in gloom, whether he looked back upon the past, or forward to the future. But we cannot believe that he never brightened up a little, in the sense of his unrivalled pedestrian powers, and the exhilaration of rapid exercise. With his regular work and spare habits of living, he must always have been in superb condition; and as a vigorous body can hardly fail to react on the spirits, especially when scenes are perpetually changing, we imagine him turning his back on those Straits of Behring, and swiftly retracing his footprints on the snow. The blood, though it is coursing through aged veins, gets into something of a glow with the violent exertion, and the load of his troubles is perceptibly lightened. He reminds himself that morally as materially he is laying time and space behind him; and though condemned to perpetual reflections on his destiny, he cheers himself with the hope of ultimate expiation. Nay, he insensibly takes some interest in the incidents of the walk; whereas, if he had been wrapped up in furs in sledge or carriage, he would have been lost in sullen self-absorption. He may be thrown back on the shuddering consciousness of his self-terror when the troops of ravenous wolves, bursting out upon him from the frozen skirts of the pine-forest, acknowledge the talisman of this second Cain, and changing their howls into panic-stricken whimperings, wheel back again with tails tucked between their legs. Yet on the whole, the excitement of the exercise is making another man of him, as he steps out on the crackling surface of the snow, and battles with the piercing blasts that come laden with ice-drift from the ice-fields.

It is true, and Siberian associations remind us of it, that there are circumstances in which pedestrianism may be unmitigated woe. We picture the dragging chain of convicts, who have been sentenced by the

paternal justice of the Czar, herded forward in gangs by the lances of their escort, as, turning their backs upon their homes and happiness, they set their faces forward to the mines. They say that these Siberian landscapes are beautiful, in the first hot glow of the late-coming spring, when Nature, wakening from her frozen trance, seems determined to make the most of her brief waking time. The rivers in dark-brown flood, sweeping fir-stems and ice-blocks on their swollen currents, are running down between slopes of emerald meadows enamelled with beds of glorious wild-flowers. The skies overhead are as blue as the lakes; the winter silence of the boundless forests, now changing their black into freshening green, has been broken by the twittering of the innumerable birds that swarm among the willow boughs overhanging the water. The waggoner and the woodsman, stolid though they may be, move about with a lighter step; and the Cossack of the escort raises himself in his rusty stirrups, and makes his shaggy horse caracole to the spur. But the balmy, bracing air, the scent from the flowers and the resin of the pine-trees, the songs of the birds and the sparkle of the waters, only weigh down the spirits of that melancholy walking procession. There they go,—ruffians and respectable people, married and single, old men and maidens, all mixed up together—forced to lie down and to get up, to move forward, to “sit at ease,” and to halt, at the word of command. The “hardest” man finds his heart and feet begin to fail him, when slave-driving and abiding despondency have taken all the elasticity from his limbs; for where

The merry heart goes all the day,
Your sad one tires in a mile-a.

That second sketch from Siberia may seem to be a digression, when we profess to be writing of the pleasures of pedestrianism, and yet it is not so much of a digression as it appears. For though we have never had marching-orders for the Russian quicksilver mines; though we have never submitted to what we take to be the nearest British counterpart to them, namely, a month or more on the treadmill by order of the magistrate, yet we have suffered something similar in kind, if scarcely in degree. When life was young and the temper easy, we made one of a walking-party, personally and conjointly conducted. Memory has nothing to allege against the companions of our travel. On the contrary, we remember as good-humoured a knot of fellows as one might recruit in any average circle of acquaintances. But somehow the ties that bound us began from the first to tighten unpleasantly, and shortly afterwards to chafe. The bent of one man was archeological, another was all for the beauties of nature, a third preferred to observe the manners of cities, smoking cigars on the promenades, and sunning himself in the casual smiles of beauty; while a fourth revelled in walking for its own sake, and was never so happy as when grinding a-head like a traction engine. In short, the council, that used to assemble every

night, came to smoke the calumet of discord when they proceeded to discuss arrangements. Not merely the route, but the hour of the start, became a standing subject of contention. One man was footsore when the others were fresh; the minority turned sullen when irritated; and the joint-stock friendship would infallibly have been shattered as effectually as any travelling companionship that was ever jolted to pieces in a post-chaise, had not the comrades been wise in time, and separated by common agreement.

No: the salt of pedestrianism for pleasure is free-will, with the unrestricted exercise of private judgment. Good-fellowship is excellent up to a certain point; but the enjoyment of it depends on the looseness of the connection; and it is when a man is most assured that he is absolutely his own master, that he is ready to make any concessions in reason. We imagine a pair of friends, who by a sensible fiction have only gone so far together as casual companions, discussing plans at Rotterdam. One mentions between the puffs of the after-dinner cigar, that he thinks of proceeding by train to Bonn, and making a leisurely exploration of the side-valleys of the Rhine, beginning among the copses and vineyards of the Siebengebirge. The other nods friendly approval, adding half apologetically, that now that he is where he is, he has half a mind to spend some days in the interior of Holland. He has read M. Havard's picturesque books, from *The Dead Cities of the Zuyder Zee* downwards; he has always been an admirer of the Dutch landscape school; he has a fancy for comparing the country with reproductions by its painters, and so on. Still, on second thoughts, his walks in Holland will keep; Rotterdam is within easy reach of Liverpool Street: and on the whole, as his friend means to do the Rhine, he will be glad to go with him—at all events so far. The Rhine is on the road to everywhere else; and the chance is one that may not soon recur, since so much depends on the season and on the weather. The time of tourists is not yet, and the readings of the barometer are rising. What can be jollier than breakfasting on Rhine salmon and strawberries, under trellises in gardens at Königswinter and Remagen. They will see those worthy Rhine burgers *chez eux*, without being swamped among Americans and Cook's excursionists; they may fish in the Ahrthal or roam in the Eifel. In short, he is simply following a lead in place of giving assent to a formal proposal; he is looking at everything that suggests itself in the rosiest colours, and is only eager to be off.

But "not so fast!" insinuates his friend, with a deprecatory wave of the hand. He has been listening and likewise considering while smoking. The weather *is* fine and likely to remain fine. Really he is in no particular hurry, and a few days up or down are neither here nor there. Holland *is* a most interesting country, and every man ought to see it. Not the cities, with their hackneyed picture-galleries in the custody of *laquais de place*, but the inner life of a simple-minded people. Capital training for the muscles to begin with, that doing your four-

and-a-half miles toe and heel on the level towing-paths along the canals. If it were sitting with cramped legs in a *treykschuyt* or the interior of a diligence, that would be a different thing altogether. And Dutch life on the canals must be a perpetual panorama, with the barges inhabited by happy families, and the bargees smoking like their own cooking-stoves, in floating gardens of gay summer flowers. The meadows may be monotonous, no doubt, with the broad stretches of rank green and the dykes that do duty for fences. But all depends on the weather and the lights; and it has been decided that the weather is settled. It is something to study the scenery that inspired a Cuyp, and to admire the herds of cattle whose ancestors were immortalised by Paul Potter. He almost contemptuously disposes of the objections his ally hastens to urge. The inns rather rough and ready, according to English ideas? Why, of course they are, and so much the better. Neither of us know a word of the language. Yes, that is undoubtedly a nuisance; but after all, not without its advantages. We shall have to appeal to the intelligence of the Dutch innkeepers by pantomime, and so our luxuries will depend on our own ingenuity. And the other assents with a grateful sense that his friend is even a better fellow than he thought him; making at the same time the sage stipulation that the Rhine-bound man is not to consider himself tied to Holland for an hour longer than he likes. The stipulation is prudent because altogether superfluous. The association established on these generous principles of mutual accommodation may be confidently trusted to last; and we may rely upon it that if the weather turns out as was expected, both will look back on that walking tour with pleasure.

Most people are bound to work for a living somehow, and it is a great thing in choosing a pursuit to arrange to make a pleasure of your business. For that reason we have always been inclined to envy those who can satisfy their modest desires by walking the country in some congenial occupation, who can turn tramp, for example, or pedlar, as the case may be, without sensibly derogating from their social position. We grant that a gentleman can hardly do so, and more is the pity. He has been brought up in habits, notions, and prejudices which it needs something more than simple effort to shake himself clear of; so that what would be pleasure unmingled to a more lowly mortal, to him must be tempered with gall and bitterness. There have been exceptions, like the famous Bamfylde Moore Carew, but then Mr. Carew was a decidedly eccentric genius with irrepressible natural affinities for savage existence. As a rule the gentleman has an amiable weakness for well-blackened boots, and hair-brushes, and sponges, and clean changes of raiment. He may have no great objection to humble fare, but he likes to have it served in Christian fashion. Though he may be very far from being a literary man, he does occasionally open a book; although not over-fastidious as to his company, still he has been in the habit of drawing the line somewhere above the ragged frequenters of road-

side public-houses. Slinging a heavy pack may be all very well, if your legs are strong and your shoulders broad; and there are few honest ways of getting daily bread without sweat of the brow or sorrow of the soul. But it is clear that it would be physically out of the question to strap a well-filled valise with canteen, clothes, and indispensable toilette requisites, on the top of the oiled cloth package that contains your assortment of wares. The peripatetic merchant must be independent of those elegant frivolities; but then those who envy him remember that he is independent in more senses than one. If he succeeds in paying his way, and giving cash down for his purchases, he need call no man his master within the limits of the beat he maps out for himself. He retires to rest when he pleases, and gets up when he likes; leaving almost as little trace behind of the round he has followed as the wings of the bird of passage in the air overhead. He has no worrying letters left by the postman, and if he spell out the paper over a pot of an evening, the political and financial news have no painful personal interest for him. What comes home more feelingly to a labouring man, he dreads no importunate visits from collectors of rates and taxes, no periodical applications for rent, backed up by threats of executions or expulsion. His lodging is in bed or barn, according to the state of his finances, and, on a harder pinch than usual or of a summer night, the boughs or the heavens are the canopy of his bedstead. He must be tolerably steady and frugal, else he comes to grief at once, and with his temperance, and the regular routine of his life in the open air, his health is proof to ordinary exposure. The bitterest cold is but agreeably bracing, for the carrying that pack of his is warm work; and a storm of rain only freshens him up, while he gets used to having his clothes dried upon his person. Of course he should be a merry fellow, with tact and *bonhomie*, otherwise he has obviously mistaken his vocation. Wordsworth's famous pedlar was one of the most wildly ideal fancies ever generated in the teeming brain of a poet. The man must have had private means of his own, otherwise he could never have made the two ends meet as he went maundering about the dales and fields, forgetting himself and his business in philosophical reveries, and boring everybody he button-holed with interminable philosophical disquisitions. We can hardly conceive this "pedlar" cheapening a gross of needles when buying wholesale in Kendal or Penrith; and in place of his presence in their cottages being a "joy for ever," the good wives of the dalesmen must have dreaded the visits of the chapman who so very seldom came down from the clouds.

Bob Jakes would rather have been "the man for their money," and if they had found out the trick of that "broad thumb" of Bob's, they would only have laughed and thought little the worse of him. George Eliot never drew anybody more vigorously natural, though that is saying a great deal. We fancy we see him striding along the lanes, the stick that served him for yard-measure in his hand, the handkerchief

loosely knotted round his short bull neck, self-confidence and self-satisfaction in the shrewd face that is ready to go on the grin at a moment's notice. Though his lines have been cast in the English eastern counties, Mr. Jakes is a born citizen of the world, and in a different rank of life might have blossomed into a great diplomatist. As it is, perhaps he is all the happier. He has perpetual change of scene, and his quick faculties are always on the watch, when he appears to be most open and simple. He carries the gossip of the neighbourhood at his fingers' ends, and when stories run short he is ready to invent them. If he can make a satisfactory bargain offhand, good and well; but on the whole he takes more pleasure in his gains, when he screws them out of a skinflint like that respectable Mrs. Glegg. His least profitable time is when selling to some rustic coquette who pits her charms against his susceptibility. But if she does knock the better part off the margin of his profits, he carries that over to the debit side in his mental accounts and tries to take his revenge out of his next customer. It is a comfort to explain to Mumps how it happened, and Mumps, though by no means impressionable himself, understands his master's foibles and tolerates them. We have always thought Mr. Jakes' marriage a mistake. Though he was just becoming a capitalist in a modest way, yet the sense of domestic cares and household responsibilities must have weighed upon him more heavily than his pack. In fact, a married pedlar is an anomaly, although in many cases he must come to matrimony at last, and that we take to be the chief objection to the calling. You must look forward to the probability of being landed sooner or later in a dilemma, when you will have to choose between your pleasure and your affections; and even if you retire with a snug nest-egg in the savings bank, you will always look back regretfully on the roads.

If a married pedlar is an anomaly, it is the reverse with the regular tramp. He generally appears to take the bull by the horns, and mate himself, or, at all events, get hand-fast, before he is well out of his teens. We do not say he is a man to be admired, and if his biography were to be published in the form of a tract, it would be written rather as a warning than an example. But we are by no means so sure that he is not to be envied, though he cares as little for the decencies of life as for its conventionalities. He has no belief in the rights of women, though he has decided opinions as to their duties. His wife bears the lion's share of a load which is light at best. She does the lion's share of the begging; and usually she is quite sufficiently ragged and out of condition to excite the charity of impressionable philanthropists. She acts the part of the Indian squaw, when she and her companion set up their wigwam under the hedge; she pilfers the wood and fetches the water and boils the kettle, and has to bear up besides against any of those passing outbreaks of temper which leave him sunnier and more *insouciant* than before. And should her soothing presence begin to stale on him, he is free to leave her at a moment's notice. Even a modern edition of

the resolutely-minded Saracen maiden who followed Thomas a' Beckett's father to England, would find it hard to lay salt on the tail of that exceedingly slippery character, should he once determine to give her the slip. For himself, he seems to be the most light-hearted of vagabonds. You meet him tramping along at his own lounging pace; or see him washing the dust out of his throat before the village "public;" or basking dreamily on the sunny sward, with his short black pipe between his teeth. Even when he does not profess some light pursuit, such as broom-selling, umbrella-mending, or scissors-grinding, he is never altogether without occupation and excitement. He goes in for the romance of dishonesty on a small scale, with the gratification of knowing that the risks are infinitesimal. Nothing escapes his practical eye, and he is always ready to help himself to anything that in the old border *parlance* is not too hot or too heavy to carry. Game and poultry are legitimate prizes, and when they do not go into the pot, they may be bartered for beer at the alehouse. If he should be caught, the short term of confinement is an incident that is discounted in his peripatetic philosophy; and the county unions are so many grand hotels, where he finds endurable accommodation at a moderate expenditure of labour, should the worst come to the worst. It may puzzle one to guess where he lies up through the winter; but it is certain that when you see him reappear in the spring, he is as fresh, as smiling, and as careless as ever.

The charm in the life of this chartered scamp and libertine is, that he is professional and yet unprofessional. It is true that he walks for his living, but he arranges his walking as he pleases. We can imagine him looking on with contempt and disgust at the performances of the pedestrian who has been backing himself against time. He used sometimes to see a sinewy figure in tight jersey and loose knee-breeches, striding along the high-road in a cloud of dust, accompanied by men on horseback, and followed by a shouting mob. He knew that if the match had been made in earnest, the hero of that mob-worship had been condemned to severe preliminary training. He had got up and gone to bed early; he had "sweated in his clothes," and stinted his appetites; he had stopped his tobacco and cut down his beer. The very notion of such sustained self-denial sends a shudder through the free and easy tramp. And he would shrink almost equally from the feat for which that training was the preparation; for it must be owned that our road-bred tramp is generally a cur, and very apt to "shut up" when he is "collared." We say the tramp "used" to see that kind of spectacle, because in these latter days the professional pedestrian works under conditions that strike us as even more disagreeable. We grant that it must have been unpleasant on a sultry summer day—that swinging along in the sun and the dust, the centre of a surging crowd of ragamuffins. Yet we should have preferred the ordeal with its inevitable suffering to the dismal monotony of the staked ring and the sawdust, where you grind out the rounds like a horse in the threshing-mill, under the eyes of spectators

who are perpetually relieving each other. Pedestrianism ought to associate itself with the open air, where the lungs may expand to the freshness, and the spirits have a fair chance.

Professional pedestrianism is become a business like any other ; and men cannot be matched to profitable purpose where there are no means of taking gate-money. Even where all that is expected from the "assistance" is applause, a man must sacrifice his likings to his thirst for glory. So Captain Barclay Allardyce, who may be called the father of scientific pedestrianism, consented to bring off the first great match of a thousand miles in a thousand hours under the eyes of the sporting public on Newmarket Heath. No man had a more magnificent physique, he came in a winner "in a cheerful canter," and yet the conditions of the task had weighed on him. Though his strength held out to the end, thanks to the stomach that never failed him, his sinews had swelled and threatened to give way, and his legs had been affected by spasmodic twitching. The fact was that he went on walking under compulsion, and in circumstances that weighed insensibly on his spirits. When he let nature have her way and made his efforts by way of enjoyment, the feats he performed were simply marvellous, and he scarcely seemed to feel them. One of these achievements we find recorded in a volume of *Pugilistica*, lately compiled by Mr. Henry Miles, and we can vouch generally for the authenticity of the details, remembering to have heard the story from one of Barclay's old cronies. Visiting at a house in Aberdeenshire, he went out grouse-shooting at five in the morning, and when he came back twelve hours afterwards, it was computed that he had covered at least thirty miles. He dined and started for his home at Ury, doing the sixty miles in eleven hours without a stoppage. Next afternoon he walked sixteen miles to dance at a ball through the night, and return to Ury by seven in the morning. Without going to bed, he went out partridge-shooting, having "then travelled not less than one hundred and thirty miles, supposing him to have gone only eight miles in the course of the day's shooting at home, and having danced at Laurencekirk, without sleeping, or having been in bed for two nights and nearly three days."

We can enter into the spirit of that sort of amateur professionalism. Ambition apart, the man who is proud of a magnificent constitution, by no means objects to drawing liberal drafts upon it, in the belief that his reserves will last for ever. And if there be a reaction after the excess, he can always, if he pleases, lie by and recruit. In reality we feel more admiration—certainly we feel more astonishment—at the performances of people like country postmen. We have one of these men in our mind's eye at the present moment. He is undersized and somewhat shambling in his gait ; he is rather knock-kneed than otherwise, and though he stoops forward in true professional style, he seems to get over the ground uneasily and with an effort. Yet day after day, ill or well, starting early in sun or rain or snow-drift, he walks his indefinite distances somehow,

keeping time within a certain measure. His life is a free translation of the thousand miles match in the thousand hours, with no immediate end to the performance in prospect. The incidents that break the monotony of the occupation, are the gales that well-nigh blow him off his legs, a rain-storm that soaks him to the skin, or a snow-fall that doubles his labours. Occasionally, too, there will be correspondence for some remote farmhouse or hamlet, which has seldom a letter more than twice in the quarter or so; and then as he casts a loop round fields and foot-paths, his toilsome walk is lengthened indefinitely. When he goes to bed dead-beat, he knows he must begin again *da capo*. And so, till rheumatism or old age comes to lay him by the heels, dogged perseverance must wind him up, while he perseveres in his rounds like a rickety automaton.

We cannot imagine mortal man envying the high pressure pedestrianism of the postman; but, as we have suggested, there are gentlemen with the tastes if not the powers of a Barclay, who may fancy the tramp's mode of existence, and may be inclined to adopt it with refinements and improvements.

At the same time there are material and almost insuperable objections to making pedestrianism for pleasure the purpose of existence. Days shorten disagreeably through two-thirds of the year, and from late autumn to early spring you have impossible weather and impracticable roads. But that is of the less consequence, that the bulk of well-to-do mankind can only indulge themselves with brief holidays, and a happy thing it is for them that it should be so. The very essence of such enjoyment is in the short and sudden release from care. Then, if you would make the most of precious leisure, what is more inspiring for a strong and vigorous man than pedestrianism, anywhere between this country and the Alps? The only thing that can compare with it is a riding tour, and riding has its drawbacks. Then one must do the grandest scenery at a foot's pace, keeping a watchful eye on the track and a steady hand on the bridle. You must have your servant in attendance, and yet, unless you are exceptionally lucky, must see to the stabling and feeding of your animal yourself. The pedestrian has no cares of the kind, and his weightiest responsibilities are as to the disposal of his baggage. Even as to that his anxieties are reduced to a minimum. He can send on a portmanteau by rail or coach, taking *carte blanche* as to his plans in the intervals of re-establishing communication with it. No doubt the lightest knapsack is a nuisance, but then through the "wale" in which, as Mrs. Gamp observes, we are born, we must always be handicapped in some form or other. So he swings his knapsack with the feeling that the world is before him, and a buoyant sense of independence. We know nothing pleasanter than the rise at early morning in the beginning of a walking tour. None the less that, as you detest early rising, when you draw up the blind and lean out of the open casement, you are greeted with the unfamiliar spectacle of a sun getting up in his splendour. The light clouds are streaked with the subdued colours that give all the promise of a

glorious day. The dewdrops glisten on each leaf and blade of grass. You listen to a chorus of the sounds of the country—the crowing of cocks, the cawing of rooks, the harsher notes of jackdaws and starlings through the clamorous twittering of sparrows and swallows. And the air feels none the less fragrant for a certain earthy freshness, which is being dissipated already in the warmth of the sunbeams. Though you have as little melody in your voice as the rooks or the jackdaws, you catch yourself humming snatches of song as you hurry over your toilet.

Of course at that unearthly hour you have no idea of breakfasting. Possibly you launch yourself handsomely with a glass of creaming milk, mildly mixed with spirits or sherry, and you have left your lodging-place behind you and fairly taken to the road. All the springs of the body seem to be set free of a sudden, after the comparative inactivity of months. Steadily you settle down into your stride, and yet you soon begin occasionally to loiter. There is so much to see and admire, and a long day is before you. We may suppose you in England, and walking in the home counties; for it is the good luck of the Londoner to live within reach of some of the most delightful scenery in the island. Here you are in a deep lane—a lane that has been worn out from time immemorial by waggon-wheels and horse-hoofs and the water bursting from the landsprings that flood it after continuous rains. Now the gravelly bottom is dry enough, and almost like a well-kept gentleman's approach; yet the footpath carried along in the field by the side, shows that at times it is actually impassable. The sandy banks are burrowed by rabbits, and bound together by the gnarled roots of the great elms and beeches whose branches arch overhead. The leafy vista is closed by a sharp gravel-rise crowned by a swing-gate; and thence you emerge on a bit of breezy common. There, though the sun is sensibly warmer, you feel the full crispness of the morning air. The lights in the foreground are clearer than before, though a faint blue haze is drawing over the distance. There is a windmill on the heights to the right, among the patches of yellow furze; and from the dene on the left, which is clothed in copsewood, come the crow of the pheasant and the cooing of the wood-pigeon. Another turn, after a mile or more, and you leave half-reclaimed common for more cultivated country. There are rolling patches of waving wheat, and bits of meadow-land among the great overgrown hedges, where the cattle are lazily ruminating up to their hocks in grass and buttercups. There are homesteads with their many gables and stacks of chimneys, and their straw-yards with the rows of cattle-sheds, and the big outlying barns; and now you come on a hamlet among orchards, and then on an oast-house and a hop-garden.

Much as you have been enjoying the walk, you are by no means sorry, when striking along a path that crosses a park, where there is a right of way before the windows of a venerable mansion, you catch sight of the tower of the village church. For more than an hour you have been exceedingly hungry, and moreover are quite ready to sit down. In

calling the halting-place a village, we should shock the susceptibilities of the natives. With them it ranks as a market-town ; and in old days its inn was a great posting establishment, where at least a score of coaches changed horses daily. Now, though the vast stables are tenantless, and the host sits at an almost nominal rent, it still perpetuates some of the traditions of its former comfort. The breakfast, served in a parlour hung with coloured coaching prints, is by no means to be despised. There are honest chops of Southdown mutton, rather bigger, perhaps than is altogether desirable, but tasting of the wild thyme on the neighbouring downs. There are fresh-laid eggs forming a symphony in white and gold with the slices of frizzled bacon ; and there is golden butter too, with home-baked bread, and coffee of which the short-comings are covered by the cream. Strictly speaking, the pedestrian should consider himself as half in training, and regulate his appetite on ascetic principles. But after all, you are walking for pleasure ; nor have you backed yourself to cover any specified distance. So, trusting the future to Providence, you breakfast to your heart's content ; and then follows the pipe, or possibly the snooze on the rugged horsehair sofa, with a lounge down the high-street to the blacksmith's forge, before you start for the second stage of the day's work.

Then, guided by a map and a pocket-handbook, you diverge here and there as the fancy takes you, though your road lies mainly along those Downs that fed the Southdowns that supplied the chops. You plunge deep into wooded side-valleys, embosoming some ancient manor-house or moated farm ; you turn away to some solitary little church, noted for its brasses, or its quaint-lych-gate, or the venerable yew that overshadows its tombstones ; or you climb to some swelling crest, where, slipping the knapsack from your shoulders, you may contemplate the beauties of some half-dozen of counties. A vagabond for the time, somewhat indifferent to challenges for trespass, you strike across country, following your fancy, till it becomes a toss-up where you find yourself towards the dinner hour ; and should the study of character be at all in your way, there are ample opportunities. It is not every man who has the gift of "drawing the rustic ;" but if he have it, the pedestrian has unrivalled advantages. As you go trudging along, somewhat warm and dusty, each wandering tramp acknowledges a brother in you. The chatty old farmer, rattling home from market in his spring-cart, pulls up to offer the wayfarer a lift. His house stands but a stone-cast down the lane there, and he will be "main glad" if you turn down with him and try his homebrewed. He will give you his version of the stories and romance of the neighbourhood ; or you may invite the garrulous gossip of the aged sexton delving in "God's acre ;" or of the shepherd, nearly as old, leaning listlessly on his crook among his flock ; or of the sturdy keeper leaning over the gate, keeping an eye on the leverets and young pheasants ; or perhaps of the object of that keeper's bitterest aversion, the parish scapegrace with poaching proclivities, whom you find taking his pot before the wayside public.

These home counties are very delightful in their way ; and it is convenient to take your exercise and admire the beautiful within the range of cheap railway fares from Charing Cross. But you have a few weeks to spare, and meditating more distant adventures, hesitate between the Highlands and the Continent. After much hesitation you decide for the Highlands. As to their grandeur there can be no question—ask yourself about it in the depths of some “Valley of Weeping,” like Glencoe, or on the brow of some hoary-headed giant like Ben Nevis ; and the range of their vicinity is infinite, from the softer inland lochs among the birches and hazel-coppices, carpeted with mosses and matted with dog-roses, to the blasted heaths of the North and the storm-beaten mountains of the watery Hebrides.

As Baillie Nicol Jarvie remarks, “It winna deny” that there are grave objections to touring in the Highlands ; but if you should be fairly fortunate in your weather, the pleasures will amply repay you. Steady sunshine, were such a phenomenon conceivable, would be an unmitigated misfortune. You want mists, and rainstorms, and flying showers, to give the finest effects on the lakes and the mountains. And not forgetting the Alps and their glaciers, we know nothing more invigorating than the mountain air, mingling with the briny breeze that blows off the curling sea-loch. We know nothing richer in their freshness than the various greens, shading from the tender shoots of the bilberries, that skirt the blooming expanse of the heather, down to the vivid darkness of the streamers of seaweed, that have been stranded by the receding tide below the boulders on the water line. Mounting the steep inclines of the road, you look past purple promontories to the shivered mountain masses in the distance whose bases are washed by the surf of the Atlantic. It is an effort to leave the coast-scenery behind as you strike inland, taking the course of some little stream for your guide. Yet before you have gone far, if you have not forgotten the semi-marine landscapes, you have ceased to regret them. Turn which way you will, the picturesque is always predominating, even when grandeur recedes into the background. In a day’s walk that is well within your power, you dive into the depths of sombre gorges ; make your way along the face of frowning precipices on a road that is carried between rock and river ; wander by a rippling trout-river, along smiling straths, and then leave them for the shadows of hanging woods, where you hear the murmur of rills and the rush of waterfalls mingling in the gloaming with the cries of wild creatures, and giving them in the neighbourhood the reputation of being haunted.

Few countries surpass Scotland for the variety of the charms that may be comprised in the compass of one long summer day ; but half the battle in a walking tour after all, is the looking forward to a pleasant evening. That the dinner should be decent goes as a matter of course ; and in Scotland there is rarely much reason to complain of it. Salmon from the stream, or herrings from the loch ; hodge-podge, hill mutton, perhaps venison-collops or grouse, are viands that ought to be fairly satis-

factory to any man. But even more important than the meal itself, we hold the subsequent lounge by way of digestion and soporific. Now in Scotland, even assuming the weather to "hold up," instead of coming down in a "clearing shower," towards sunset, that lounge is often rather an effort than otherwise. You are putting up in a small Scotch borough—surely the least picturesque of all agglomerations of houses, or on the solitary road that passes the door of the highland inn and goes under the black shadows of fir-woods very similar to those you have walked through in the afternoon. Moreover, there is generally such a nip of rawness in the air as makes you understand the partiality of the natives for toddy. On the continent, on the other hand, and especially in Switzerland or Southern Europe, we regard that evening stroll or lounge as one of the pleasantest items in the day's programme. For that very reason we look shy on such elevated valleys as those of the Upper Engadine, where you may shiver involuntarily in the evening air, even in a shooting coat that is padded out with all the contents of your knapsack. In more genial latitudes, high though they may lie, the joys of voluptuous retrospect begin when the pain-mingled pleasures are over. You have stripped, and bathed, and changed, and dined. The agreeable lassitude of which you were conscious during your repast, has been toned down by the repose and judicious stimulants; and with a strong sense of satisfaction in labours that are past, you adjourn to the verandah for cigars and coffee. Did ever mortal contemplate a more superb spectacle, from a comfortable reserved seat under the free vault of heaven? There is the lake sleeping in the moonlight and the sparkle of the stars, where it is not enveloped by way of coverlet in the shadow of the encircling mountains, with all the rest of these poetical details which the fancy of the reader may easily fill in. And though the lights of the promenades and the fashionable hotels may be reflected on the surface as well as the constellations, the prospect is far from being spoiled by that mingling of the artificial with the poetical. You have been communing with lonely Nature through the day, and it is anything but disagreeable in the way of contrast to enjoy the luxuries of refined civilisation, and mix with your fellow-men, in the evening. So, should you have been walking in Brittany or Normandy, after a day's experience of black heaths dotted over with dolmens, or of long lines of umbrageous avenue shaded with elm-tree and poplar, you like the humours of the quaint little market town towards night, when man begins to rest from his labours and make the most of his modest means of amusement. You have ungirt your loins for the time being and left your staff in the upper chamber, and you look on with the dispassionate interest of the pilgrim at the cross-country diligence unpacking before the post-office, at the heavy white Norman horses led away to the watering, at the citizens bringing home their good wives from an airing, at sentries relieving guard before the sous-prefecture, and the conscripts flirting with maidens in mob-caps and sabots, in the kindly shadows of those projecting gables.

Not that you are not well content, once in a way, to have taken up your night quarters in some solitary hostelry in the very midst of the desolation of nature. It lies far away among the mountains—say, in the Pyrenees or the Apennines—and shelters in some nook of the gloomy pine forests, overhanging the bed of the *gave* or mountain torrent. Supper, such as it was, disposed of, you have no great temptation to step out-of-doors. The falling shadows of the clouds confuse themselves with the pine tops, although here and there between the two is a dim streak of grey; the heavens threaten to become as dark as the woods beneath them. There is scarcely a sign of movement among the trees, yet already there is a fitful sighing and murmuring among their branches, like the faint tuning of *Æolian* harps; already, too, there is the light patter of raindrops on the soft carpet of fir needles. Soon the pipe you are smoking in the porch must be put out or taken within doors: the winds are unchained, the gusts come roaring down the gorge, driving blinding sheets of water before them, illuminated occasionally by the gleaming lightning; and between the rasping and the groaning of the shaken trees you almost fancy you can hear the howling of the wolves that the war of the elements has roused from their lairs. What a change has come over the scene since you walked up the quiet valley in the early evening, loosening your collar to the sultry air, in an almost portentous stillness! Now it is cool enough in all conscience; chilly rushes of damp come out of the watery darkness, and it is pleasant, having made the casement fast after a final peep, to dive into the home-spun sheets and the genial warmth of the coarse blankets, and be lulled to sleep by the roar of the storm that seems to shake your refuge from roof-tree to foundations. Possibly there may be temperaments that object to that sort of hurly-burly by way of lullaby; with its running accompaniment of salvos of thunder, and the blue fire that will flash to the eye through closed shutters and eyelids. They may prefer the sublime tranquillity of some Alpine scene, where the lonely inn or *châlet* where they have found a shelter seems lost in the dazzling and limitless immensity of snow-slope and glacier glittering in the moonlight, and arched over by the starry canopy of the heavens. The silence is the most impressive of poems, the glacier-world the most soul-stirring of romances, and, moreover, they have before them the prospect on the morrow of some exploit that may be attempted under the most favourable circumstances. We cannot cap a climax like that, so there we bring to a close our desultory chapter on pedestrianism. For those gifted with the necessary nerve and strength, there is nothing in the wide range of walking experiences that can transcend the pleasures of an autumn campaign among “peaks, passes, and glaciers.”

Fina's Aunt.

SOME PASSAGES FROM MISS WILLIAMSON'S DIARY.

VIII.

LAST night, instead of putting out my lamp quietly in my chamber, I found myself far away from Old Street, flying through the darkness and watching the countless lights of London twinkling into the distance. Josephine was beside me, scarcely less emotional and tremulous than when she came hurrying into my room to entreat me to start with her to poor little Fina's help. I had almost expected she would come, and I was ready to set off at once.

Opposite to us sat Pringle, Miss Ellis's maid, with a bulging bag and a packet of shawls. She had been sent as an escort, and it was not without difficulty that poor Josephine had declined the additional protection of Mr. Burroughes' presence on her journey.

A journey is a wonderful, noisy, rattling thing! Wheels, engines, objects of every shape and kind are whirling and tumbling in every direction, in order to carry you whithersoever you want to go. There we sat, side by side, watching the ghosts of trees and hedges fly past the windows, and the dark homesteads and the horizons, and the last pale streaks in the evening sky fading into darkness. The oil-lamp swinging from above lit up my companion's pale face and Pringle's elegant bonnet. It had been Miss Bessie's once, and the worthy woman had a *faux air* of Miss Ellis, not a little alarming at times. It was a relief to me when she neatly nodded off to sleep, incited by the snores of an old gentleman in the corner, who may have been somebody else's hero perhaps, but who has nothing to do with this story.

Josephine was excited, troubled, moved from her usual composure. She opened her heart to me as we went along, a sad heart full of solicitude and remorse. "If one knew what was best and did it," she said, "nothing else would matter much; but I didn't do it. I didn't do enough for Mary. I might have tried more, done more to influence my mother, held my own against Bessie's strong will—it is rather strong, you know," she faltered; "and now poor Francis Arnheim is ill, dying perhaps, and I am only a stranger to little Fina, a new, untried aunt, no familiar home-friend coming to comfort the poor child."

"My dear," I said, touched by her natural pathetic voice, "don't be afraid, don't undervalue yourself, Fina will turn to you. Sophy King has told me that Mr. Arnheim always speaks of you as the person he most

looks to to befriend his daughter ;" and then, as I said this, I remembered for the first time that Dr. Adams was already there, and that we were travelling after him, as fast as the express train could carry us. Some instinct stopped me as I was on the point of saying so. Poor Josephine had quite enough on her mind, without sentimental scruples super-added.

Paris rolled past us as a morning dream, with fountains playing and horses' feet and people's voices awakening the streets, and the tower-like houses still closed in morning sleep. Then came a long, long burning day, as we flew across the endlessly stretching plains. We reached Bâle, with its flowing river, late at night. Josephine would have travelled on, had it been possible, but next morning very early we started again.

Though we started early, it was late in the afternoon when we reached Interlaken—our journey's end as we imagined—and found ourselves jolting among the crimson velvet cushions of the omnibus of the Hôtel des Alpes, with its many gilt looking-glasses to reflect our dusty faces. Pringle and the bonnet were especially deplorable objects, though I must do the former the justice to say that she had struggled bravely with fatigue, luggage, and every incidental annoyance. We drove straight to the Hôtel. The day was ending. The sun had set behind the great snowy range. The *table-d'hôte* was just over; a crowd of people were standing about the door; some of them stared at us, some did not even stare. The manager, the waiter, the chambermaid, the porter, all rushed mechanically to receive us. Poor Josephine looked at me, for she could not speak. In answer to my anxious question, they said Mr. Arnheim had stayed there, but it was at Grindelwald the accident had happened. His young lady had been sent for. There had been letters for us, they said, but they understood we were at Grindelwald, and had sent them on. He was very ill when last they heard, some days ago. It was very unfortunate.

Either the people could not or would not tell us more. Except this dismal fact of an accident, of which the telegram had not warned us, we learnt nothing from them. "A carriage." Certainly we could have a carriage, but the road was dark. There was a late *table-d'hôte*. Would we not wait for it, and start next morning?

"A carriage directly," Josephine cried; "we will go on at once, if you please." Pringle gave one gasp of horror, and then stood grasping a parasol, and helplessly looking at me in a mute, piteous condition.

At that moment I remember hearing the distant echo of the music at the *établissement*. What an odd sensation comes over one when one appears to be alone, going against the stream of life! There were we, with all this sorrow before us; there were all these people, only thinking of music and of the passing hour.

Pringle was left behind, to follow in the morning. Josephine and I got into the little *einspanner* with its strong grey horse, and trotted away through the closing twilight. The long cool evening drive was perhaps

more restful to us than anything else would have been. We were glad to leave the noisy Hôtel, with its lights and garish company. The roads grew darker and darker, but we had a lantern to light our way; the horse's hoofs sounded sharply on the road, or hollow when they struck a wooden bridge; the stream went rushing through the black shadows; the trees rustled; winds from mysterious vallies came blowing in our faces; here and there far distant lights flickered from the farmer's chalets. The horse's bells jingled and jangled in a quieting drowsy measure, but poor Josephine's anxiety was too great to let her rest. Now that the long journey was over, now that the end was so near, all her strength too seemed to fail. Neither the fragrant air nor the soothing sounds could reach her. The road seemed interminable. It was almost midnight when at last we reached Grindelwald. As I looked round, in the light of the last lingering village lamps, I might have recognised some of Sophy's descriptions, but my poor companion's anxiety and exhaustion preoccupied me entirely. She was trembling violently. The carriage rolled into a court-yard, where the stars were still alight, though everything there seemed to have been blown out for the night; but at the sound of our carriage wheels, a lantern flashed, some one came to a side-door, and opened it. My heart sank, and I seemed somehow to know we were too late.

"Is a gentleman lying here ill?" said Josephine, in an odd husky voice. "Is Miss Arnheim up? Are we expected?"

"No one is expected," said the man. "Will you come in? Come in." And through the darkness a groping hand was put out.

"We must get out," said Josephine quietly. "There is nothing else to be done." And then, leaning against the doorway, she looked hard at the man's face. The light fell upon her anxious eyes and upon his placid weather-beaten features. He shook his head. "The young lady was fetched away by her friends to Meyringen," he said. "The doctor is come back, he will speak to you." And he held back the door for us to pass into the hall. Then he kindly and clumsily opened a second door and led us into an empty dining-room, dark and bare, with cleared tables and one dim burning light. "Sit down," he said, pulling a chair, into which Josephine sank, very pale, and as if she were going to faint. He patted her kindly on the shoulder. "I will get you some hot wine," he said. "I think the doctor is not yet gone to his room," he continued; "he was smoking on the terrace not long ago. The poor gentleman did not suffer long. He was out alone on the glacier. We all know the dangerous place, but he did not. A rock fell from the cliff. Some shepherds found him. He was gone."

We neither of us spoke. Josephine sat quite still, quite exhausted. It was all over, and she sighed and did not move. Then I heard a door bang, and footsteps. Even at that moment I could not help speculating as to who the doctor might be. Was it the one doctor in all the world best able to help her? Was it, could it be, John Adams? I heard steps

again coming nearer and nearer, and advancing. Then I looked at Josephine, whose face had been turned towards the door, and by her face I knew who it was who came in at that moment. She put up her hands. "You, John!" she said, quite simply and utterly amazed. Then, as he came up out of the darkness, very grave and silent, holding the pipe which he had been smoking between his fingers, something in his gravity and silence, something in his look, at once touched and softened her tight-bound heart. "Poor Francis gone—and *you* . . ." She burst into a great flood of warm, passionate tears, and hid her face in the outstretched hands he had not taken.

"I see," he said, "you heard the worst. Poor fellow, he only lived a few hours! We laid him in his grave three days ago. I—I have just come from it," he added quietly.

"And Fina?" I asked, for I saw that Josephine could not speak.

"Poor little Fina! she is with Miss King, at Meyringen. I left her there this morning. We expected you would have gone straight to her. She was not here," he added, "when the accident happened. Her father had come up for the day to arrange about some music at the church." "Poor Arnheim!" said the doctor, "his music is silenced now.

Dr. Adams was, I suppose, very kind. He said all that ought to be said; that we must be tired; that we ought to go to bed. He hoped we would let him know if there was anything he could do for us. "I imagined you would have gone straight to Meyringen," he said. "Miss King is with Fina all day. The Hôtel is quite full, and the child is staying at the convent. She is quite well, she knows the nuns, but it will do her good to see friends. I suppose you will wish to go to her the first thing in the morning," he added. "This man will see about a carriage for you. He is an intelligent fellow, and understands these things better than I do."

After the first moment of emotion, as soon as he had time to remember, he seemed to become embarrassed and cold. His estranged voice filled poor Josephine's brimming cup. She got up, tried to stand, and fell back into the chair.

The porter who had let us in put out a strong arm, and helped Josephine, still half fainting, to her room. I saw the doctor make a half motion to come to our assistance, but he drew back almost immediately.

"Good-night," he said, looking hard at Josephine for an instant, and then he walked back through the open window to the balcony.

"The Herr Doctor's room leads from the balcony," said the man. "I can bring the lady tea. I have hot water. Tea is good when you are tired."

Here was this casual porter helping us with friendly cheer, while he who should have done more than all the rest to befriend my poor Josephine went off with his odious pipe. I was in a rage with the Doctor.

IX.

I rose early next morning with a purpose in my mind, and dressed myself and knocked at Josephine's door, but she was not in her room and did not answer. It was a bland and lovely morning, with indescribable peace in the air and in the dawning sunlight. This peace and tranquillity seemed everywhere, in all the place, on the steep slopes, on the wide shining valleys, on the clear mountain line that seemed carved against the chill sky. I needed not to ask my way to the church. I walked quietly up the village street and across the bridge that spanned the stream. I could see the quaint-shaped spire with its leaden night-cap at the turn of the road. The church stood in its sacred little garden, the shadows of the many crosses and footstones were slanting on the turf, the flowers were glistening with morning dew, so were some footsteps that had already crossed the grass. An old man was at work, feebly striking with an iron bar at the churchyard wall, and when I asked him to show me poor Arnheim's grave, he amid his blows raised one hand and pointed, saying in his German, "That is the grave where the mourner is standing," and then he bent to his work once more.

Josephine, the mourner, as the old man called her, stood very still, with clasped hands and a drooping head; some quick, heavy, large tears were falling from her eyes—tears of pity, of remorse for the past, and few remembering tears, alas! are without some such salt in them. She held out her hand to me. It was only for a minute that we stood there, saying good-bye in our hearts to our old friend.

"I will try, I will try, to make up to Fina for all the things in which I have failed to them," said Josephine, in a low voice; and then she burst out crying once more; then stopped short and wiped her eyes and looked up into my eyes, and her face looked very sweet. As we came back the little street was waking and bustling into the day; the first sweet blinding rays of morning light were dazzling and striking upon the stream and the windows of the houses; the mountain tops flashed; the mighty Wetterhorn seemed almost floating in early radiant mist. Other travellers were assembling in front of our hotel, where our carriage was already being prepared. Our friend the porter was at his post, discussing some point with a neat little old man in knickerbockers; a short stout lady, accompanied by an artistic-looking person in a cloak and a troubadour-like hat, was handing parcels to a guide and directing the loading of a mule. The coffee-room, which had seemed so silent and dreary the night before, was cheerful enough now, and full of clatter, which is not bad furniture in its proper place and time. One or two people were breakfasting at the little tables; jugs were smoking, insects buzzing round about the honey-pots; an energetic waiter was chasing coffee-cups and wasps, and tumbling over the chairs and the breakfast-tables. John Adams, with a great pair of horn spectacles on, came

into the room just after we had entered; he was evidently looking for us, and Josephine went to meet him. She had taken off her long cloak and was carrying it on her arm; her broad hat still shaded her face; her eyes were still soft with tears. She looked very sad and sweet, I thought, and she put out her hand.

"Perhaps you will soon come over to Meyringen and see us," she said, simply. The great emotions of life, even its regrets, make people real, and not ashamed of being themselves for a while, and Josephine was herself at this moment.

I saw the Doctor brighten and look pleased. What he said I don't know, for I had many other things to attend to. I had to pour out the coffee, to ask for the bill, to add up all the little figures curling into strange 9's and 5's. But while I did the sum, some vision passed before my eyes. I could imagine this gentle womanly woman happy at last, and making others happy, in a home brightened by the warmth of its own warm hearth. For once, all seemed likely and propitious. I did not now regret the mistake which had brought us so far out of our way. Mistake—it seemed some friendly interposition of benevolent fate which had thrown us all together.

Our little carriage was waiting alongside a string of mules and horses drawn up for the use of some adventurous travellers who were starting on their day's expedition. The guides came stumping into the courtyard, dressed in their loose brown clothes; some little puppies were tumbling out of a stable, barking, and rolling over and over in the sun; some children came shyly to the door, offering Alpine flowers, brown stalks with yellow heads (which description, by the way, applies to the children as much as to their posies). As we drove off, I could see the whole cavalcade filing down the hill, across the torrent, and beginning to climb the steep staircase leading to the Little Scheideck. I could also see the Doctor standing, watching us from the inn until the road turned. Josephine looked back once, and seeing him there, blushed crimson.

Putting the sad real purpose of our journey aside, I pleased myself for a few minutes with a little fairy tale, in which it seemed to me as if Fortune had amused herself by complicating feelings and people and sentimental interests into a hopeless tangle, and then, being in some good-natured mood, she had transported them all—perplexities, regrets (nothing is so hopeful in love-making as a little regret), into this sweet green valley, where amid the fragrant pines and the green Alps, and the gentle radiance of white and golden flowers and veils of soft verdure, to the soothing rush of mountain streamlets, and the solemn serenities of white snow and clear-cut peak, fate ceases to be fate, and becomes kind and commonplace and homelike, and separations turn to meetings, and to fidelity; and sensitive humility and self-mistrust change to gratitude, to intelligent sympathy, and trust.

Our way lay by the Great Scheideck, as it is called, to Meyringen, which is but a day's journey from Grindelwald. You climb up into the

clouds, you take breath at Rosenlauri, you descend into a deep valley, and there is Meyringen.

I believe that in all Switzerland there are few more lovely sylvan passes than that one between Grindelwald and Meyringen, by the baths of Rosenlauri. Part of the road lies through a wood, like one of Shakspeare's sylvan forests, and then you travel on by noble downs, to Rosenlauri, which is only a mountain inn near a glacier on the Meyringen side of the Upper Scheideck Pass, but it is a favourite resting-place with travellers. Here is food, here is wine. Here is shade to rest in after that burning climb along the rocky pass; the torrent foams along the gorge; mosses and sweet green things overflow its rocks; goats are browsing on the fine grass and flowers; delicate clouds from afar come floating along the rocky points and clefts and ridges. The sky burnt violet without a veil that day as we rode up and dismounted at the door. But though nature smiled upon us, our eyes were in no grateful mood; the thought of that terrible chance which had befallen poor Arnheim haunted us at every step. It was midday when we reached the baths. The earlier part of the road had been trying; the sun was very hot, the mules were weary, and needed rest; and the way, to our impatience, seemed longer than it really was.

The host showed us up smilingly into the usual wooden dining-hall, where two attendant Swiss maidens were coming and going with glasses of beer and country wine, and with smoking portions of kid suited to the tastes and purses of the travellers. Here, too, was the usual balcony or terrace, with a lovely spreading view of cloud-capped mountains, of rushing streams, and green pastures. The Wetterhorn is the presiding deity of this lovely valley.

I said something of the sort to Josephine, but she only answered: "It seems as if all the mountains in the world were between us and Fina; we shall never get to her;" and then Miss Ellis impatiently pushed away the plate which had been put before her. While John Adams had been present she had borne the suspense with less difficulty. "An hour's delay will not make much difference to the poor child," I said, trying to calm her. "Fina is with friends."

"Friends!" she repeated. "One can't count much upon friends—except indeed dear old tried friends like you. Friends keep away when they might be of comfort and of use. They come when they can only bring discord and pain by their presence." She spoke excitedly, and scarcely looked like herself.

"I cannot think why Doctor Adams did not come on with us a little way," I said, in as matter-of-fact a voice as I could muster.

"Don't you see that he only left because we were expected?" said Josephine. "He said as much when I asked him if he would not come over and see us," and she looked at me hard.

There are times when one would be thankful to be wiser than fate, to say some word by which to reconcile and explain away facts as inexor-

able as these mountains on either side; but I could think of nothing. I was too much disappointed to pretend not to understand. I could only heap her plate with wood raspberries by way of showing my sympathy. We were not the only occupants of the big *salle*. All the while we had been talking a voice had been scolding steadily from the balcony outside, while at the other end of the room a couple of athletic clergymen, dressed in a certain grey and black plaid which the clergy affect on their travels, and with beards, and with a trophy of umbrellas and knapsacks between them, sat enjoying their cutlets and their subdued jokes. The scolding voice on the balcony was anything but subdued—"Well, then, you should have seen that it was in time. It is inconceivable. I desire you to see that the mule is ready—and I am kept waiting, ten minutes, who knows, ten hours. Ring the bell (ding dong). Do you call that ringing the bell? Ring hard, or they never come (ding dong, dong dong). Mossieu, Mossieu! Vien ici! Why have not they brought my mule? What does he say, Eliza?" "He says it is there, Aunt Matilda, waiting in the shade." "Really, Eliza, I sometimes think you mean to laugh at me. Now then, do think of something for yourself. Get me my *capote* and my large *ombrelle*, and do not be an hour about it." Then came a tap of heels, and two women bundled across from the window to the door.

How vividly I can see it all. At the time the scene made but little impression upon me. Now, as I think of it, the figures rise before me like the witches' ghosts in Macbeth, and the midday heat, and the scolding voice, and the hum of wasps, and the sense of the great and lovely world without, all overshadowed by the thought of the poor little daughter waiting in the valley below. That poor child's tears dimmed the splendour of the summer day.

We reached Meyringen, stumbling and sliding down the precipitous road, walking most of the way, and only mounting again at the foot of the pass. Meyringen lies in a valley among battlements of granite, natural outposts of rock, boundaries that enclose you on either side. The Gremsel rears its stony forts across one far end; only to the west do the rocky gates seem to open out, where the sun sets radiant, unconfined, over lakes and across gentle slopes, where distant towns gleam by distant waters.

Holiday makers from the north and the west come up this valley on their way to Italy, and struggle over rocks and snow and dreary heights into shades of chestnut—into the languor and wonder of Italy. Notwithstanding the icy gates of snow and rocks that separate Meyringen from that happy land of Goschen, whither we all turn wistfully at one time or another, some flash of Italian sunshine seems to play upon the village, with its vine-bound galleries and windows, on the pretty square terrace and the balconies of the inn and its flight of stone steps upon which we dismounted.

X.

The usual guard of honour turned out to receive us—landlord, landlady, the cook from the kitchen, the waiter from his kingdom of knives and forks.

"Here you are," cried Mrs. King's shrill little cracked voice from a balcony, from whence she waved her pocket-handkerchief, and through the midst of them came another figure, Sophy King herself, in her muslin dress, with a straw hat on her head, carrying something in a little covered dish, which she set down quickly when she saw us, and came with two wide cordial arms flying to meet us.

"At last," said she, "at last. Where did you go to, you poor things? We were almost despairing of you when Dr. Adams telegraphed this morning to say you were coming. Dear Fina is longing to see you. I have not left her since her good Doctor went away." He waited until he heard of Miss Ellis coming.

I could not think what odd change had come over Josey. She began a set speech to my annoyance, something about—"I am sure my mother and I have every reason to be greatly obliged to you for your great kindness to Fina." "I hope you will now be relieved from your watch."

"Relieved!" said Sophy, greatly hurt. "I don't want to be relieved, though I was glad you were come. Would you wish to go to her or to refresh yourself first?" she asked, with some shade of sarcasm. "If you like, I will go on and tell her you are coming, and the landlord will show you the way."

"We will come with you," said I hastily, "dear Sophy. It has been such a comfort to think of her with you all this time."

"You know she is in the convent," said Sophy, relenting a little; and then going back for the covered dish, she added: "The nuns' fare is rather austere, so I get the landlady to help it out. The convent is close at hand." And so saying she set off quickly.

I seemed to hear voices buzzing on every side, and people saying that the friends of the poor young lady had come. One person and another joined on to our little procession, still headed by Sophy carrying her dish. Then came Josephine, silently following with her silk dress trailing; she looked stern and pale, I thought. At such a time, with such a meeting before, surely jealousy and egotism should have had no place in her heart, and indeed, by degrees her better self asserted itself; her looks changed and softened, the thought of the little lonely girl must have put out all others less worthy. Sophy once glanced at her over her shoulder, and then, seeing that she was crying, softened in a minute.

It seemed to me as if all the inhabitants of the hotel must have come down from their various balconies to follow us and our guide stumping ahead in her straw hat. She led us past the châteaux and the balsam pots,

past the church and the fountain, to the market-place, at the corner of which the convent stood. It was a curious tall house built upon piles or arches.

"Our sisters keep a school," said the landlord, who had also joined us, having only waited to get his felt hat. "They know Miss Arnheim well. Allow me, Missis,"—to Sophy, as he nimbly ran up the stone steps and rang the bell, conscious that the eyes of the whole company were upon him. Besides the people who had come along with us, were all those assembled in the wine-shop with the red curtains opposite. I could see eyes peeping curiously from between the flower-pots in the window and from the doorway. The bell swung with a melodious deep clang, the low door opened, and the landlord, still leading the way, stepped into a cool passage painted in black and grey, and passed under grey stone arches leading to a steep wooden staircase, an oaken ladder leading to an oaken heaven, where some very dirty little angels were flapping their wings and scratching on slates under the supervision of a sister, who looked up smiling. She had a bright face framed in black muslin frills that seemed intended to shade bright eyes and rosy cheeks and the unholy radiance of health and youth that lingered in her smiling face. Perhaps this is an article in many of our creeds, and we are only too ready to consider as sacred those earthly veils of black, those cobwebs of dust and disappointment, that fall upon us all in our life's journey until one day we find that these too pass away.

"We are glad to see you," said the nun kindly; "the poor child will be glad. She is asleep; go up, go up."

Fina, wearied out, had fallen asleep that hot autumn afternoon in the little bare room to which the kind and pitying nuns had brought her. The window was open; all night she must have seen the stars twinkling in the sky, while she tossed to the distant roar of the mountain-torrent; and now by day the sun streamed through the deep casement, half shut out by a green curtain, and the sound of the torrent came still, but softened by daylight and its many echoes. She had fallen asleep, tired out, lying on the outside of her bed, with all her dark hair tangling on the pillow. She slept, and peace came, for she was smiling in her dreams. A round-faced sister standing in the doorway peeped at her, and gently crept across the room and drew back the blind. The child started, and awoke with a little exclamation.

"They are come, darling," said Sophy, standing by the bedside, and flinging her arms round the little prostrate figure.

"Who are come?" said Fina, bewildered still. "Is mamma come?"

Alas! "they" only meant Aunt Josephine—only meant me, a poor helpless old governess. Fina did not repel us though she broke out crying again. She rose slowly from her bed in her long white dressing-gown and came to meet us, and lay in Josephine's close-folding arms.

"Oh, yes! you are like mamma," said Fina. "She used to kiss me as you do." Then she went on: "Just now I was dreaming, and I

thought papa was giving me a music lesson, and mamma came with the light and I awoke. It must have been the light from the window when the nun drew the curtain back."

Poor little maiden! Though veils and frill caps do not seem to me sacred, though lighted candles seem little worth the solemn protests of belief which are given to them, other symbols there are, other signs and sacraments, which few among us do not acknowledge. A child's trust and admiration for its home relics and beloved home saints, a father's ceaseless, tender, protecting love, seem to me among the most holy things of life. These simple creeds and early unquestioning beliefs are not less true because, as time goes on, other things less complete, less easy to understand, less home-like—arise. The day comes, indeed, when children leave their mother's arms and their father's sheltering care; they have to struggle for themselves, to accept doubts, and disappointments, and perplexities—some human, some ghostly; but not the less true are these simple traditions because of the wider and more complicated experience of later life. There is something almost supernatural in this book of childhood, of common things and common people made wonderful to the love of baby eyes.

It was fortunate we came when we did, for almost immediately after our arrival Fina fell ill. For ten days the poor child, parched by burning fever, lay tossing in her little convent room. I telegraphed to Dr. Adams, who had gone back to Interlaken, and who came at once. His presence was the greatest help and comfort to us all. What did we not owe to his skill and perseverance as day after day went by? It was a curious phase of existence. The little nuns, who were kindness itself, let us come and go as we liked, while they kept their monotonous and peaceful rule. We could hear the hymn from the chapel as we sat by Fina's bedside. Sometimes it seemed to keep time to the mountain thunders, for the weather was unsettled during Fina's illness, and storms were constantly breaking.

The Doctor always spoke very cheerfully, and declared that his patient was much too well nursed not to recover; and, indeed, the result proved that he was right.

The first time that Fina was out of danger, I left Sophy King beside her, and went with Josephine for a little stroll through the village air. As we passed the clockmaker's shop, the Doctor came out, stooping over some glasses he held in his hand, which he was trying. He looked up quickly, nodded, and smiled gravely as we went by, but did not speak. Josephine flushed, as she always did when she saw him.

"He has gone back to his experiments," I said, "now that he is no longer anxious about his patient. As Sophy says, Fina certainly owes him her life."

"Dr. Adams attributes Fina's recovery to Miss King's wonderful nursing," said Josephine; "she repays his compliments."

What childish creatures human beings are after all, and how oddly

that which somebody else prizes or despises gains or loses in value in our eyes. Poor Josephine did not need any one to teach her to love John Adams, as I knew better than Sophy did ; but she had not been able, so it seemed to me, to appreciate him hitherto. She would not own it, and yet Bessie's supercilious strictures must have had a certain effect upon her mind. That is just the difference ; people can influence our minds, but not our hearts. They can prevent us doing justice to the powers of others ; but they cannot prevent us from feeling in unison with them, from realising certain inexplicable links that bind us mysteriously together.

The Doctor, for some time, seemed unaware of the jealousy between the two, and went his way ; but one day, coming in upon a discussion, he spoke very sharply to Josephine, who had refused to give up her place by Fina's bed when Sophy's turn for watching came round.

"A good nurse not only knows how to watch her patient," said he, "but when to leave her post ; she takes rest when necessary, and does not give unnecessary trouble to other people."

Josephine got up at once, but I met her in the passage in tears soon after. Poor soul ! her heart yearned after the child, and she would gladly have carried her away from every one of us.

These troublesome confusions of life are among its most painful experiences, the too much which is no less vexing than the too little. Things which might have brought so much blessed joy and tranquillity only seemed to lead to pain and complications.

I remember walking home to the hotel one night, and speculating as to what might have been if only the Ellises had behaved in a more reasonable manner. Nobody's feelings would have been wounded, not even my poor Sophy's, who would never have come across this Doctor at all. If anything could have added to my annoyance, it was a letter from Mrs. Ellis, which I found waiting for me in the bureau directed, in her pretty, old-fashioned writing.

"If I were not afraid of being more hindrance than help, I would come off at once," the old lady wrote. "My heart is with you, and with little Fina, and my child Josephine. Dearest Miss Williamson, I know I can trust your kindness and discretion. I hear from my daughter that Dr. Adams is at Meyringen. It is easy to surmise what has brought him once more upon the scene. Pray take care that my dear child is not carried away by any passing feeling of pity. He is a complete stranger to me and mine ; he does not belong to anybody I have ever met anywhere. You can understand what my anxieties must be when I think of my poor girl's future, and how I have regretted this wayward fancy of hers. But all the same, it is possible, Rose says, that we may have been hasty in our conclusions ; and if you should have an opportunity, pray give my compliments to Dr. Adams."

And so, after behaving in this unconscionable manner, and insulting a person of whom we knew nothing, we were now prepared graciously to

change our minds and send him our compliments. It was all very well, but I was far from certain that the Doctor had not changed his. The Ellis family seemed to expect that the whole world was made for them and their excellences. On the whole it seemed to me that if the Doctor changed his mind it would not be a bad thing for him. Sophy would be much cleverer, more liveable, cheerful, and comfortable than Josephine, and might suit him a great deal better. Ah! what treason was this? Forgive me, solemn hills and steadfast ever fixed stars. Is love a bargain? Is it a bargain to be weighed and sold and bartered? or is it a blessing, a mystery, unexplained, granted to man in mercy, and coming to redeem and shape anew the pangs and sordid schemes of daily life?

My perplexities were solved by no less a person than Sophy's father, who rejoined his wife and daughter at the end of a week. He would not hear of remaining at Meyringen. "Fina had her own friends," he said; the place was close, very close, and stuffy; he heard there was a good cook at Rosenlauri; he wanted to get higher up. . . . Sophy, very loth, very reluctant, came with tears in her eyes to take leave of us all. It was a great pang to her to have to go just then. She said good-bye to me with tender effusion, to Josephine Ellis with scarcely concealed relief. "You will write daily, and tell me about Fina," said Sophy wistfully, and holding me by both hands. "I can't bear to leave her." And her eyes winked and radiated as they did when she was moved.

"She has the best of doctors, at any rate," said Mrs. King, wishing to console Sophy. "And you know, Sophy, he has promised to come up and tell us about them all."

"Then we need not trouble you with letters," said Josephine quickly. "You will hear all you want to hear from Doctor Adams."

Sophy opened her eyes. "You needn't write if you don't feel inclined," she said good-temperedly; "but I shall be always grateful for letters, and I will get everything ready for you when you come."

"I beg your pardon," Josephine said suddenly, all ashamed, and looking very charming as she came up and flung her arms round Sophy's neck and kissed her, and Sophy gave back her kiss with a friendly nod.

To be ugly is quite a different education from that of being beautiful. As a rule, ugly people are less shy, and much more polite than the beautiful; their friendship is perhaps less fastidious. Josephine was older than Sophy, but she knew far less of the world, she was more reserved, less able to battle with life. I had come to understand the poor Doctor's odd estrangement, and the meaning of a certain irritable manner which had puzzled me at first. The Doctor, with all his simplicity, knew something of men and women. He was too observant, too much used to watch his plants and his insects, not to mark peculiarities in the people among whom he lived. Sophy's undisguised warm-hearted admiration was touching but bewildering too. Here was a woman all ready to love him, and there was the woman he had loved.

Shy, prim, jealous, not indifferent as I knew—but how could he know it—perhaps he could not help contrasting the two, not always in Josephine's favour. And in the same way Fina loved her aunt already with something of the sweet wayward worship she had given her mother, but Sophy was her friend and playfellow and companion. Poor Josephine felt as if here, too, Sophy came between her and her heart's desire.

One day there was a great storm; the thunder echoed overhead among the mountain peaks and crannies. Then a mist rolled down, darkening and hiding everything from our eyes. Then the rain fell in steady torrents, pouring and increasing hour by hour. At last the rain ceased, and the curtain of mist was raised.

A new valley was revealed; a great river was thundering past the village; it was the stream overflowing, swollen and frothing in fury. Undine-like waterfalls suddenly improvised were streaming upon the mountain sides. I remember four little shepherd boys passing by, driving their splashing goats up the village. The boys were all of them drenched with the rain, but laughing as they shook the streams from their skins and broad felt hats. The storm ended as mysteriously as it began, and our little patient, who had been more ill all day, and more oppressed, suddenly revived that night, and seemed to shake off her trouble.

When the Doctor saw her early next morning he said the fever was gone, and that the sooner we moved her now the better. "All the more," said he, "that I have to leave you to-morrow, and I should be glad to see you safe at Rosenlauri before I go."

I should have been glad if any other place but Rosenlauri could have been selected for Fina's convalescence, but it was the nearest and the most obvious place to go to, and the little thing was longing to rejoin her friend.

XI.

So we took leave of our friendly nuns, who came about us in their veils to say good-bye. Fina, from her chair, waved her thin hand to the sisters as they stood in the doorway and on the steps that led to it. The porters lifted her from the ground gently and started off smoothly at a rapid pace. The Doctor, with his green plant-box and his battered alpenstock, followed with long strides and many diversions on the road in search of one and another mysterious treasure, and my fat mule carried me bravely over the stones and up the steep. Josephine was also riding, but towards the end of the ascent she got down, seeing that Fina was alone, and walked beside her. Josephine had a knack of always being composed and graceful. She was little used to mountain ways, but it was a pleasure to watch her as she flitted smoothly ahead. Once or twice Dr. Adams came up and spoke a word to her, but only a word. He seemed absorbed in his collections, and so indeed was Josephine in Fina's comfort. The two were silent and preoccupied. When we had

gone about two-thirds of our way we saw a figure beckoning and waving welcome on a rock round which the road went. Need I say that it was our friendly Sophy come to meet us, and not in the least preoccupied, but heartily engrossed in our journey and our progress? She had put on spectacles in order to make us out the sooner. She wore a pork-pie hat. She held a stick in one hand and a basket in the other. She had clumping boots and a stout heavy petticoat of some discoloured plaid. She was flushed with her exertions, having climbed this steep rock to see further ahead. The path was scarcely a safe one for a young lady, though it might do very well for a goat or a little boy. Sophy looked not unlike a sturdy little goat herself at that instant, as she came hopping down to the path below.

"I brought some food, in case Fina should want refreshment," said Sophy; "but how much better she looks." At the sight of Sophy, spectacles, pork-pie hat, and all, the dear little patient face had lighted up with something of its old delight. Sophy's coming now made some difference in the order of our going. Miss King laid her hand on Fina's chair and walked beside it, and Josephine fell back and followed with Dr. Adams. Every step seemed to bring new life into Fina's pale face. What a sweet progress that is from the valley to the mountain. The pine-trees look drenched after the storm, but the torrent has already gone down; the rocks glisten; strange little new mountain torrents come from the heights of the ravine, over which soft handfuls of fleecy cloud are drifting gently and half asleep. Though it is late, and the sun has reached the valley, it seems quite early still, and as though the day was not yet begun for us. Last night the rocks and stones in the bed of the torrent were covered by the stream, but all is tranquil again. The waters flow with their accustomed measure—a sort of gay dancing measure, in the time of an old-fashioned valse. A little goat followed us browsing the dripping grasses and flower-heads. It was a sentimental creature, with a fancy for white flowers, *millefoil* and wild celery I heard the naturalist call them. We watched its nimble black lips with an odd fascination as it cropped them one by one. "It came after me all the way," cried Sophy, triumphant; and Fina smiled a real first childish smile of delight and interest.

Sophy and she seemed at home in this sweet native land. Sophy gave Fina a bunch of wild thyme she had pulled up on the road. She seemed to have some natural affinity for all this mountain life, for the morning visions, for the clouds that rolled down the green dripping flanks of the mountains, among fragrant tree stems and all sweet things. What a green garden it is, in which the goats travel from rock to rock, browsing as they go, cropping leaves and choosing out of the delicate fantastic abundance. Sophy, too, had gathered some of this from among the strawberry rocks in the fir wood. Her pockets were full of cones and of berries of one sort and another, of oak-apples and of some golden fungus that had caught her fancy. I heard her telling Fina

wonderful stories as she walked along, of a little lizard, bronzed and lazy, hanging on a bank, and of a terrible apparition—a big toad—she had seen that morning hopping from the root of a tree.

Mrs. King was again looking out of the window when we reached the hotel, and waving her languid handkerchief. I remember the Doctor's eyes following Josephine as she crossed the threshold, passed in through the doorway. Her cheeks were aglow, her eyes alight, she was touched and awakened to a strange new beauty. Sophy, who loved beauty, whose own clumsy ways were a positive pain to her, also watched her for a moment, and an odd expression passed across her face. Then she rallied, took off her spectacles, and gaily calling out, "This way, this is Fina's room," quickly led us down a passage, knocking over a great jug on her way. She had everything ready, wonderfully arranged and prepared, and a snowy restful bed wide open for the little invalid to slide into.

That afternoon, little Fina being safe asleep in bed, under the care of Pringle, we three ladies strolled across the meadow in front of the hotel, and made for a little wood house by the stream, where long fragrant planks still wet with resin lay ready for the builder's hand. Saws and sawdust, shavings, all the scraps and surplus of the place seemed equally fragrant. Sophy sat perched upon some planks, Josephine was standing in the doorway looking out, I found a comfortable seat on a heap of logwood. There was a delicious sound of water in our ears, for the stream dashed past quite close by; the waterfalls after the storm came gaily pouring from the mountain; everything, indeed, seemed alive—passing, floating, drifting, breathing, the very wind was life-giving. Suddenly comes a stir among the planks; a little calf had been hidden among them, and trotted swiftly away, escaping into the field. There seemed to be some swift good-will and fitness in every natural thing round about us, which put us all into good spirits for the moment. Sophy made some joke, and burst out laughing; Josephine smiled; some one came to the door and looked in.

"You look very comfortable," said the Doctor. "I shall envy you to-morrow, when I get back to my cockney home."

He looked much more like a dweller upon mountains than anything else, as he spoke—a tall, lean, hairy man, with those marvellous bright glances of his. They might certainly have made any young lady's fortune. Josephine's glances were scarcely less bright in the cheerful excitement of the moment—of Fina's recovery, of the pleasant change of scene. The moment seemed propitious for me to speak up. "Dr. Adams, I have never given you a message. Mrs. Ellis wished me to give you her compliments.

"And won't you go and see mamma in her cockney home, and give her news of us?" said Josephine.

"I am a busy man," said the Doctor. "I shall not have much time for visits when I get back."

He did not say it rudely, but I saw Josephine change colour. Sophy looked up quickly ; there was a moment's dead silence.

"Do you know this?" said the unconcerned Doctor, holding up a little flower to Miss Ellis. "I have often read of it; I never saw one till I came here. It is a certain kind of astrangia. It puts me in mind, I don't know why, of a delicate old maid. These flowers have all characters of their own; one can never tell what may not be going on when one ties up a bunch and sticks it into a glass."

I set him down—vexed though I was, I could not help being interested in this doctor—as a romantic independent man, with a vein of common sense, and wondered what flower would best describe him. Wild thyme came into my mind somehow, for, though I was provoked with him, it was impossible not to do justice to his simplicity and many gifts. My Sophy was another plain-looking flower, with a fragrant perfume of good heart and wit. She was certainly not much to look at. There she sat on her log, with her feet hanging, and her plain good-humoured round face; not one grace, not one mystery of expression to give a charm to her dumpy figure. And there was Josephine, who, without a thought or a wish, looked all that Sophy would have so gladly *said*—Josephine who, by turning her head or raising her hand, seemed to be able to speak a whole life's emotions.

The Doctor never in all his life talked more delightfully than he did on that occasion, except, perhaps, after dinner that evening, when we all sat lingering in our places in the wooden dining-room, to hear him across the filberts and macaroons. His acquaintance and familiarity with the world of nature seemed extraordinary even to me, an ignorant outsider, but the charm of his description reached us all—a child could have understood what he said. He began with the plants and the flowers growing all round about; he described their characteristics, their habits, their ways of thinking and behaving. Then came the turn of the insects, and the very worms in the ground, as he talked, put out their wings. The whole beautiful world seemed to live again a new Paradise, a new dispensation from a still more lovely and wonderful point of view. Is this the secret of Paradise regained? Paradise re-entered a second time by patient effort, by humble and modest interpretation, by knowledge, by the toil of man; evil and corruption surmounted and explained by the life-enduring labours of a watchman faithful to his post, and counting the atoms as they evolve, and revealing their secret of life. Josephine's cheek had caught some faint flush of excitement. Sophy laughed right out with enthusiasm. "I never knew any one who knew anything—everything—before," she cried.

Doctor Adams was almost annoyed.

"I," he said, "I know nothing comparatively. You should try and meet my friend B., who has followed the evolution of points absolutely undiscernible hitherto with the strongest glasses, and hear what he has to tell you. There's C., who, after years of the most magnificent work,

has reached whole systems shining far beyond our fixed stars, and subject to a *different law*. Such things make one feel," he said simply, "like a child putting a few toys side by side in a row."

I shall never forget that evening upon the mountain, as we sat at the dimly-lighted table in the big room with its dark corners. The clock struck nine while we were still listening to the Doctor's voice, rising and falling. Sophy was absorbed with her cheek on her hand, Josephine all stirred, wondering, admiring, faintly blushing, and for once quite carried out of her usual ladylike composure. As the clock struck nine Doctor Adams moved his chair.

"I start very early to-morrow," he said. "I will go up with your leave and see my patient once more. You had better come," he said to Josephine; and she, too, rose, fetched a light from a side table, and then some sudden shyness, some self-consciousness made her turn and come back to me and put the lighted taper into my hand.

"I will follow immediately," she said.

I don't know whether he noticed it or not; he walked away with his hands in his pockets.

Little Fina was awake when we came into the room, quiet, lying comfortably. She did not know that the Doctor was going, as she said a drowsy good-night. He gave us a few last directions, standing in the passage outside.

"Fina will miss you. We shall all miss you," said I.

"Poor child!" he answered, with his kindest voice and look. "Poor little thing! She will have friends and a good aunt to look after her. Don't you let that sister of yours bully her when you get back," he added, turning to Josephine as she came up the passage. "Remember it is your duty to protect the little girl now."

Miss Ellis looked half pleased, half angry. "Why do you speak in this way?" she said. "You don't suppose—— You don't know my sister."

"I *do* know her, very well," said the Doctor, remembering that scene in Old Palace Square.

It was almost impossible not to smile. But Josephine was wounded; anything from him touched her too closely. She tried to speak, she burst into tears, and running into her own room, which was next to Fina's, shut the door, and appeared no more that night. I hoped he might have left some friendly message for her, but he did not. He said good-night, and walked away swinging his arms.

Very early in the dawn I awoke, and heard low voices and footsteps under my window. It was the Doctor starting on his homeward journey.

"Leben Sie wohl," said the host; then some low, answering growl from a guide; then all was silent.

Next morning, at breakfast, I was amused to hear Colonel King say that "that Doctor Adams was a very good fellow—no pretensions; and

not one of those persons who are likely to force their acquaintance upon one afterwards." Poor Sophy turned her face away.

The days went by very quickly after the Doctor left—green, or grey, or golden—bringing storm and sunshine in turn. They were all good alike, after their kind, and we were all the better for them. Nature is a wise and powerful friend. People come to her dizzy, and tired of the world of men and their anxious ways. Lo, the charm begins to work! You are no longer free; you belong to something calmer, greater than yourself. To all these drifting lights and fragrances, to these distant peaks, these shining rocks, "souls attuned to sorrow" come up, rebelling even against sunshine. They are dazzled by it; it hurts their heavy eyes, long used to darkness and to tears. Lo! Nature interposes with her balm, her innocent, sweet arts, her green wreaths and tranquil visions. The river starting from the rock, the green pastures sprinkled with cattle, interpose between you and haunting remembrance. You see your troubles through a vine wreath perhaps. Are you ashamed—provoked? That little brook babbling against its granite basin carries away the bitterness of your consternation. And so it was for Fina, and so, too, for Fina's aunt.

Three weeks take in a great deal of living, even though the time passes quickly. By the end of a fortnight Fina was out again, and something like her old self. At the end of three weeks we took leave of the Kings, who were bound to Italy.

"Good-bye, good-bye! Take great care of yourselves," said Mrs. King, plaintively, as usual. "I'm sure I wish I could persuade my Sophy to be a little more anxious about herself. She is quite well now, but one never knows what may be hanging over one."

"Good-bye," said the Colonel absently, and evidently glad to be rid of us. "Keep a sharp look-out for your luggage at the station!"

"Good-bye, dearest friends!" said Sophy, bursting into tears. The parting was a real parting this time.

XII.

It is true that in England the senses are starved, light and colour and the abundance of life are wanting; but what is there is our own and suited to our tastes, we know where to look for it. The defiles of London, its difficult passes, its chimney ranges and church tops are peculiar to us, its dull home face is homelike and friendly. Even Fina seemed not ill-pleased to be in the cab, jolting through endless streets on her way to Old Palace Square. Mrs. Ellis was standing on the steps of her house looking out for us, the kind old arms were wide open. I was for driving home, when they all called me peremptorily back.

"You must come in, dear Miss Williamson. Come in. My Bessie is away. I do hope I have got all that will be wanted, and that you will find the rooms warm enough after your journey."

The house was stifling with the roaring fires the dear old lady had ordered in every room. The dining-room seemed prepared for a feast.

"Here's soup," said Mrs. Ellis, looking round anxiously; "or would you prefer tea or coffee? They are on the side table. Burroughes, have you brought up the champagne?"

"Mamma, whom were you expecting?" said Josephine laughing, as she looked at the heaped-up table. "You dear absurd mamma!"

"Bessie would have known exactly what to do, my dear," said Mrs. Ellis, humbly.

"And why is she away, and what have you been doing all alone?" said Josephine, suddenly realising her sister's absence.

Bessie is detained at Cradlebury by her sprain," said Mrs. Ellis. "She came up for a day, but had to go back again, poor dear;" the kind old lady explained, with all her sympathy in her children's ailments. "She rarely ventures out without an arm. Dear Bessie says she shall be glad of Pringle's help," continued the old lady, carving nervously at a ham. "She wishes her to take down the sewing machine and two or three numbers of *Myra's Journal*."

"*Myra's Journal*!" said Josephine.

"She wants some patterns, and the key of the lace-box, which you put away, my dear. There is a good deal of company at dear Thomas's." "Very quiet company," the old lady continued, turning apologetically to little Fina. "Quite old people, like myself, for the most part, but they seem to dress a good deal. I was certainly a most shabby old granny, compared to Mrs. Blower, Rosa's aunt. I don't think you have ever seen her. She was there with her son, Captain Blower."

"I dare say Mrs. Blower is a very gorgeous being, mamma," said Josie, smiling. "I'm sure she doesn't look half as nice as you do."

Josephine was smiling; she was in a happy, excited mood, which lasted that evening and for two or three days after. Then by degrees her smiles ceased, so did the musical, gay tones of her voice. The old anxious, harassed look returned, the old dull mantle seemed to fall upon her. "She doesn't go out enough," her mother said; "for the last few days nothing will induce Josephine to leave the house."

"That dear little Fina should seem sad at times was no wonder," the old lady repeated wistfully one day, when I happened to find her alone; "but really, of the two, my Josie looks the most forlorn. I suppose one must not want too many things in this life, dear Miss Williamson, and it is for one's good to be disappointed; but I confess my wish would have been to see my children happy. What else could I care for? While their dear papa was alive my time was greatly absorbed; he was so very particular, and nobody else understood him as I did. I am sure I have always enjoyed my life hitherto, notwithstanding a great many trials. But it goes to my heart when I see my Josephine's sad looks."

"Dear Mrs. Ellis," said I, hesitating whether or not to speak, "you

know better than I do what life is, and its cares and its difficulties. Perhaps, since you ask me, I think that Josephine, who is so like you, might have been happier in some ways if her life had been more like yours. If, for instance, as you said in your letter, Dr. Adams had not been sent away, if—if—”

I was rather confused, for I was not sure whether it was not too late to speak.

“But I wrote to you,” said Mrs. Ellis, rather unreasonably, as I thought. People are not unwilling to let other people take all the responsibility and bear all the blame if things go wrong.

“And I gave your message,” I said, “but he is very proud in his way; and I don’t think, unless he were actually summoned, that he would venture to come back.”

I saw the dear old lady’s brown eyes look so wistful that my heart rather smote me for what I had said. I remembered her age, her delicate health. I saw her hands trembling. I was grateful for the diversion of an opening door, and little Fina’s sweet face appearing in the doorway.

The old house in the square seemed wonderfully warmed and brightened by the presence of this one little new inmate. Fina seemed to have come to awaken not a sleeping princess, but a drowsy old grand-mamma. Burroughes himself had begun to rub up the plate with fresh spirit, the coachman seemed to whip up his horses, the little pug-dog, instead of dozing whole days by the fire, was actually to be seen trotting round the garden at Fina’s heels. Fina used also to take her grandmother out on sunny mornings; I used often to see them, strolling side by side, or sitting on the bench in the Square garden. One day an organ came up behind the railing, grinding out some air of Schumann which had found its way into its barrel, and at a certain note Fina suddenly began to cry, remembering all with a sharp and cruel pang.

Her grandmother could not understand what she meant at first, till the child explained.

“It was something papa used to like;” and then, before she could say any more, the faint camphor-fragrance of the old lady’s Indian shawls seemed all about her, and the kind old arms were round her.

“Don’t, don’t cry; don’t grieve, my child. Parents want their children to be happy. Oh, Fina, if you knew how they long for it—how I long for my children to be happy after I am gone! I have often thought of this since your father died. Fina, I never did him justice. I have often wanted to tell you so. I am afraid I was very hard to him.”

“Yes, darling grandmamma,” said Fina, touched to the heart, and clinging closer still to the gentle old lady.

From that day there was a tacit understanding between the two, a difference in little Fina, a look of repose and comfort which had been wanting before. The Doctor came one day to see his little patient.

“You are looking well,” he said; “I see they are kind to you.”

He only stayed some five minutes, talking to Fina in the Garden-room, as we used to call the room on the ground floor, which used to be the schoolroom. Mrs. Ellis seemed displeased when she came downstairs and heard that he had been.

"Did not the gentleman ask for me or for Miss Josephine?" said the old lady.

"No, ma'am," said Burroughes, with dignity and emphasis.

The Doctor would have gained nothing if he had asked for Miss Josephine. She was at Cradlebury. She had been mysteriously summoned by her sister-in-law, who wrote on pink paper, all over roses and Rs. Josephine was to come at once, she said. No excuse whatever would be taken. Mrs. Ellis was to prepare herself for some most interesting news, and by the very next post came a second letter, containing the news, the most surprising, the most extraordinary, the—shall I say so?—most welcome announcement—Madame de Sévigné's pen could alone have done justice to our feelings on the occasion—the great Miss Ellis was actually engaged to be married. The Captain, the Colonel's travelling companion, Rosa's cousin, Mrs. Blower's only son, boots, settlements, faultless whiskers, the arm that had supported Miss Bessie's faltering steps, the hand about to lead her to the altar—all were to be found united in the person of Bessie's future husband, Captain Blower of the Heavies. "Some people think my cousin a little prosy," the candid Rosa wrote; "but Bessie delights in his society. They talk about horses and servants all the day long, and are evidently intended for each other."

Josephine half laughed, half sympathised. Notwithstanding her evident reluctance she could not refuse to go. Poor Josephine! She was sorry to be away, and not much interested in Blower. Fina was left alone to the care of Mrs. Ellis. Indeed, it was the best thing that could have been desired for the little girl. Something to do, somebody to want her, was the way to comfort the poor little heart. Mrs. Ellis, who was a companionable and cheerful person, and who occasionally suffered from her children's excessive care, enjoyed the liberty and brightness which Fina unconsciously brought, the echo of music from distant lands, the outburst of irrepressible youth emerging from grief.

XIII.

I was amused to hear Fina catechising her grandmother one evening in the most unhesitating manner. "Grandmamma," she said, "do you suppose Aunt Bessie is in love?"

"I suppose so, my dear," said her grandmother. "We shall hear all about her from Josephine."

"Most people fall in love, don't they?" said Fina. "When I do, I shall fall in love with a doctor. Oh, grandmamma! do you think perhaps

some day it could ever happen that my dear doctor could marry Aunt Josie?"

"Has Josephine been talking to you?" said Mrs. Ellis.

"Aunt Josie never talks," said Fina seriously. "The Doctor told me he had thought a great deal about her; but that she didn't care for him. But, grandmamma, I think—don't you think—he is mistaken?"

"My darling child, I don't want to think about such things," cried grandmamma; "they are not for little girls or old ladies, and the less Aunt Josie troubles herself about such things the better."

"But who then should think about such things?" Fina was beginning; but Mrs. Ellis desired her to ring the bell, quite crossly, and so the conversation came to an end.

One peculiarity about old people is that once they have made up their minds, they act very quickly. The day before Josephine was expected home, I found a note from Mrs. Ellis, saying she had something about which she wished to consult me, and would I come over to tea?

I found the old lady alone; she looked up as Burroughes ushered me into the room. "Come here," said she. "What do you think of this?"

She was sitting at her old-fashioned desk, on which lay a sheet of paper, inscribed in her pretty handwriting. "Is it about the wedding?" I asked. "Have you been writing to your future son-in-law?"

"That depends," said she. "Read what I have said." And she fixed her bright brown eyes upon my face.

The letter took me completely by surprise. It was not intended for Captain Blower.

"37 Old Palace Square, October 10, 1880.

"Dear Sir,—Not very long ago you honoured my daughter with a proposal which was not, I fear, received as it might have been by me and my family. I did not then know how deeply my own child's feelings were engaged in a matter which took me by surprise, and in which, I regret to think, I acted hastily, and with little consideration for any one but myself, and my natural dislike to parting with one so dear to me as she is. I am not too old yet to own myself wrong. My children's happiness is the one care that remains to me in this world, and I should not like to pass away with the thought of an injustice unrepaid which it is in my power to acknowledge, although perhaps too late to remedy. If you have not formed other interests, if your mind is unchanged, I should feel grateful if you would answer this letter yourself in person. I have not told my child that I have written to you, nor shall I do so without your authority. From what little I saw of you I feel I may trust you to keep my confidence, if it comes, as so many things do come, too late.

"Yours very faithfully,

"J. M. ELLIS.

"There," she said, emphatically, "put it in your pocket; post it as

you go home with your own hands; and never speak of it again, unless I give you leave."

I could only kiss the dear old hand which she held out to me. There was nothing to be said, but something—very much—to hope.

As the hour approached for Josephine's return, Mrs. Ellis grew more and more uneasy. No answer had come from the Doctor. It was almost more than the poor lady could bear.

Josephine came home, longing to be back on her own account; full of anxiety about them both, she found, with an odd heart-ache, how well the two could get on alone.

One of the first things Mrs. Ellis said to Josephine was, "We have had a visit from your friend the Doctor since you left."

"And what did he say, mamma?" Josephine asked.

"You must ask Fina, my dear. He did not care to see an old woman like me, and went away almost immediately."

"He was shy, mamma. You know every one must be glad to see you. Captain Blower came up all the way from Cradlebury on purpose."

Then Josephine went on blushing: "Dr. Adams was very kind to us in Switzerland. I think it seems ungrateful to show him no attention. Do you mind asking him to dinner?"

"What should we ask him to dinner for?" said Mrs. Ellis uneasily.

"Don't you think he might—he might like to meet Bessie and the Captain?" faltered Josephine.

The old lady laughed maliciously. "If he is such a shy person, I should think he would much rather not."

"Oh, do have him!" said Fina, bursting in. "Do let me write!"

I did not recognise Mrs. Ellis, she spoke so sharply and so befuddled. "Certainly not, my dear. Your aunt and I can write our own letters."

Fina sat down quite crushed.

"Then shall you write, or shall I?" said Josephine, holding her own. But it was a great effort to her to do so; her cheeks were burning, and her eyes were full of tears.

"It is not my wish that Dr. Adams should be asked to dine here at present," said her mother decidedly; and the old lady went off, leaning on Fina's arm.

Poor Josephine! I hardly liked to look at her. We were both quite silent for a moment; then suddenly she burst out, "It's too unkind. Why is every one against me? Indeed," she added bitterly, "mamma has little reason to forbid our meeting. The fancy he had for me has entirely passed away. I can't understand it all," she said passionately. "Sometimes it has even seemed to me that only one other soul, only one, could interpret my own soul to me. I did not know until I sent him from me how I depended upon him, not only for affection, but for a sort of very existence. It seemed so wicked at the time, one feeling, and one only, and all the rest left behind. And now—now it seems

wicked to have turned from it." She hid her face in her hands as she spoke.

"You could not really care even for one person," said I, "if you did not bring the power of affection which has grown with a lifetime. When you marry, you will love your husband all the more, because you have not thought of him only."

"Marry!" she said, starting up; "do you suppose I could ever marry any one else?" And I remember her face lighted as she spoke. "I should like to see him again, if only once; just, just to see him, and to know how he is, and to hear what he is doing. Bessie has had no difficulties in her way." She spoke in her pathetic voice with that strange openness of reserved natures. "Your mother has her reasons," I began—

"I know her reasons," said Josephine, bitterly; and she began to walk up and down the room.

"Come out," said I. "The fresh air will do you good. Will you come to Silver Street with me? I have a pupil waiting."

She put on her bonnet without a word, and came with me. It was like walking with some one in a dream, so little did she seem to notice my presence. We went up Old Street and came out into the highway with its many carriages. I took her arm and looked right and left as we went along. We reached the opposite pavement at last, escaping the jolting dangers of the crossing. It reminded me of the day I had passed her long ago in the east wind, for at this moment the bells set off ringing overhead.

They were lowering a barrel at the public house, and she hurried forward to avoid it. I was delayed for a moment, and as I stood waiting I saw her run up against a shabby gentleman in a strange abrupt fashion. He looked down with a quick bright flash, and exclaimed—and I could see his face though hers was turned away. It would be impossible if it were not true, but this is true; and of all the people in this vast city, of all the millions and thousands and hundreds of people, this was the only one; the one person whom half a minute before she had been wanting with the least hope of ever meeting. "You!" I heard her cry—not for the first time.

"You!" he said. "I was coming to see you." And then and there in that miry thoroughfare, with all the cabs and carts jolting by, and all the shop-fronts staring at them, he took her hand and pulled it through his arm.

"Well, what does this mean?" said the Doctor to her, smiling, as they passed without seeing me.

In the Heart of the Highlands.

I HAVE wandered through many of the most charming spots in Europe, and seen a good deal of our finest scenery at home; and yet I know nothing so grand or picturesque as the country through which I passed yesterday on the newly opened Oban Railway. My first resting-place was Dalmally, at the east end of Loch Awe, and in the very heart of the Highlands. I knew the country well some years ago; and I am surprised at the change which has come over this once secluded glen. Somehow the whole of this valley has given up its weird past, and now pins its practical faith entirely to the future. The turf huts, the kilted gillies, the fiery whisky from the mountain corry, the shrieking bagpipe, and the melodious language of the glens, are sorrowfully leaving the land; and we find Saxon civilisation spreading its wings up the straths. A handsome, grave-looking bishop sat at one end of our dinner-table, and a keen-faced barrister at the other; Redfern and West End fashion were on all hands; the room rang with the purest Saxon English; the waiter was an unmistakable Swiss, and he dexterously served up the products of a Frenchman's art. Can this be the dear old legendary glen through which I passed some years ago?

The opening-up of a new railway may seem quite a commonplace affair; and yet it sweeps away all that give their character and charm to whole rustic populations; if it does not further, at least it changes, local civilisation. The railway is the great leveller of ideas as well as of social excrescences; the prime importer of heresy into church creed and rustic politics; the merciless uprooter of tradition and folklore; the stern foe of local legend and lyric—of homely poetry, song and story; the magic dissolver of dreamland and all its fancies. I pause not to inquire whether or not the iron net-work of the railway shall or shall not create a poetical school of its own, or whether or not luxuriance shall rise out of these ruins. Here around Loch Awe, at the foot of broad-shouldered Ben Cruachan, is a district even yet romantic in its history as in its scenery; but in a very few years it will have lost all its luxuriant crop of tradition, story, song, and romance. This latest extension of our railway system, which joins the capital of the British Empire to that of the West Highlands, and which brings two places five hundred miles apart within a few hours of each other, passes for its last thirty miles through a tract of country, the richest both in scenery and in tradition in this poor but classic land. Above the valley of the Awe and the green ridges of Glenorchy, hover, or till lately did hover, the oldest, most pathetic, and most permanent of all the Ossianic and Fingalian myths; here has

been reaped the richest crop of sturdy folk-lore. For upwards of two centuries this was the arena where the invading sons of Uisnach and the restless Vikings tried their prowess at the point of the Pictish sword; and here, too, there flourished a civilisation, refined and powerful, though now only known through some accidental exhumed relic. On one of the most peaceful spots on Loch Etive side flourished for several centuries one of the purest and most self-sacrificing of the monastic orders; and on one of the most conspicuous isles of Loch Awe lived and worked one of the most influential of the religious sisterhoods, once so dear to the poor of Scotland, but now with scarcely a representative on Scottish soil. In this remote Highland parish, unheeding the turmoil of the great outer world of politics and action, there ran his godly race one of the most remarkable of all the remarkable rural clergy of Scotland, an earnest and powerful, keen and subtle thinker, who grappled with the hardest problems of his day, and anticipated some of the conclusions of Bishop Berkeley, and who was considered not unworthy to be named in the same breath with Kepler, Galileo, and Leibnitz, by no less a judge than Sir Isaac Newton. Around those dark corries, up those mist-covered mountains, and down those deeply-coloured slopes, wandered, free as the air, and in his wanderings sweetly sang, the only Gaelic bard whose muse has ever risen from snarling scurrility to the dignity of pure lyric; and out of this valley sprang the ancestors of the most energetic and most richly endowed Scottish peer, whilst here was born, at a spot now marked only by melancholy ruins, the most energetic and patriotic commoner of Scotland, in the person of its oldest and most respected member of Parliament.

If one has tastes in other directions; if he cares to read geology in its native rocks; he finds a wide range here, from the granite of Ben Cruachan to the morains of Taynuilt; if he wishes to study botany, he has only to open Frazer's account of Ardehatten to learn how wide the range of the flora of this valley is; or if, as is most likely, he is inclined more to sport and fishing than to poetry and the exploration of ruins, he finds ample scope for his rod on Loch Awe and its adjuncts, with good quarters in several places on its bank. For this new railway skirts, for about ten miles, the noblest though hitherto the least known and most inaccessible of Scottish lakes, and winds along the margin of one of the most changeful and beautiful of West Highland fiords, for the most part through a richly wooded and finely scented, luxuriant country, where one would expect only the barren crag or the bleak moor.

But it is as the home of lingering Gaelic legends that Glenorchy attracts the lively sympathy of the reader. I know not any other district in the country where pagan influences have lingered so long, or in so many forms, as here, or a district which has gathered within its narrow history or conserved intact such a large number of tales concerning the protean power of evil, or the effect of unreality upon us. The old Gaelic mind was most inquisitive, most subtle, as well as most ready in

its resource. Curious, and apt to trace all events to apparent causes, it hit upon rough and ready methods of producing all effects through direct personal agency, and supplemented its own ingenuity by copious borrowing from the East. Looking at Ben Cruachan, one feels that

The giant mountain stands
To sentinel enchanted lands,

and that even yet decaying local memory may bring down on the gleaming bosom of the beautiful lake slumbering at its base the deep veil of mysterious romance. The unresting Highland mind accounted for everything by some reference, hidden or open, to its own workings; and this is how it explained the origin of Loch Awe. Once upon a time, says the explanatory legend, there was no loch in this deep valley; all these green isles, Inishail, Inistrynich, Inis Fraoch, and the rest, were only the rugged crests of the knolly country, which in the day of the days belonged to the great huntress Bera. She possessed all the mountains of the mists and all the plains of the knolls, upon the condition that at every coming of the sun or its departure she would roll a huge stone, with the magic Druid characters inscribed upon its surface, over the mouth of a clear spring that trickled out of the shoulder of Ben Cruachan. What was written on the stone she did not know, but she did know that if she failed in her task only once, a calamity would happen that would mark her offence so long as water would flow and the grass would grow. For many years she fulfilled her task, and regularly, before the sun set or rose, she rolled the mystic stone across the mouth of the well. But one fatal evening, weary with the chase, she lay down for a short rest, and was overcome by a deep sleep, and the sun set, and the midnight came, and even dawn passed into full day, ere she awoke. In great terror of unutterable ill, she made hastily for the shoulder of the mountain; but as she came in view she saw through the mist a great torrent rushing down through the glen, where only a gentle burn flowed on the previous day; and just as she had succeeded in placing the mystic stone over the cave which the bursting water had formed, the clouds arose, and she saw the whole valley turned into a lake, and such of her tribe as had escaped from the flood homeless and without shelter. And she felt the hand of death upon her, and she fell down at the enchanted well, and expired amidst the ruins which her folly or forgetfulness had caused.

Like most Highland tales, this Loch Awe one has a melancholy, tragic end, representing the Gaelic idea of life, which at its richest and best was a tragedy in a mystic setting. I give only one other Loch Awe tale in illustration of this. I give it here because it is one of the oldest of its class, and because it is the only one, so far as I know, that represents in the Celtic mythology the idea of the Greek Hesperides. Inis Fraoch is one of the isles clustering near the upper end of Loch Awe; and on Inis Fraoch, according to the melancholy myth of the locality, grew the

golden apples, which were the most delicious of fruit, and which the gods alone were allowed to taste. A great dragon guarded this forbidden fruit from adventurous intruders; and no mortal foot was allowed to tread the holy isle. But it came to pass, on one of these days, that Fraoch, one of the mighty Feine, fell in love with a great princess of the land, who asked him to prove his affection and his valour by procuring some of the forbidden fruit. He travelled far and near in quest of the golden fruit; passed through many dangers, landed at last on the fatal isle, killed the poisonous monster in mortal combat, got possession of the fruit, weak and weary tried to return in his frail craft, and tasted an apple to restore his strength. Little by little he began to grow faint; his eyes were growing dim; his throat was parched, and his energies began to flag. He had strength to gain the shore under the castle wall, where his beloved dwelt, and to stagger through her hall only to sink exhausted on the floor. As the mist of death was gathering around his sight, he confessed that he broke the commands of the gods, and that he was justly punished. She too, for whom he died, tasted and perished on his bosom. Both were buried in the same grave; and the fatal island of the great dragon was ever afterwards called Inis Fraoch.

This is merely, as it were, a leaf out of a great volume that has now nearly perished. I was fortunate enough this year to form the acquaintance of one born not far from this legendary district, and now the sole receptacle of its myths and proverbs.

Glenorchy is in all respects one of the most lovely of Highland glens; soft, rich, and velvety in its beauty. In one of the oldest fragments of Irish verse it was aptly described:

Glen Urchin, oh, Glen Urchin,
It was the straight glen of smooth ridges:
No more joyful was a man of his age
Than Naoise in Glen Urchin.

The visitor who wishes to see it at its richest and best has only to walk over from the hotel to the quaint octagonal church, with its stumpy square tower, that overhangs the sandy bed of the Orchy, and take in the various points of the magnificent prospect of which he is the centre. If by chance he happens to care for the curious bye-ways of Scottish life and history, he may profitably recall some of the strange events that crowd around this lonely edifice, as he looks upon the simple grave-stones of the nameless poor, the armoured effigies of templars and knights, and the symbols of mitred ecclesiastics that slumber here; how this quaint Highland church occupies a spot once consecrated to pagan worship, with its frantic processions, furious chants, and deeds of horrid sacrifice; how this clachan of the Most High God was one of the earliest spots seized by invading Christianity and converted to its holier services; how for centuries this glen was the ordinary highway to the wilds of the West, and the portal to the unknown and vagrant court of the feared Somerlids; and how, in

more recent times, it guarded what was scarcely the less important or the more known realm of the Campbells; how the Argyll saying, "Tis a far cry to Lochow," had a thrilling significance to the Argyll foes; and how the glen has passed through many vicissitudes which have coloured the tenor of general history. One picture of that wild state may be given here by way of specimen. In wandering through the sequestered churchyard I came upon a tombstone bearing date 1684, and inscribed with the name of Mr. Dugald Lindsay, in one sense the *ultimus episcoporum* of Scotland. The date, I know, was not that of Mr. Lindsay's death, but that of the most remarkable fact in his singular life. Here, however, where he so often preached, his body lies at rest. Mr. Lindsay, who occupies a solitary niche in the records of his time, was the Episcopal parson of Glenorchy during the most troubled period of its history, and though he always remained an Episcopalian, he enjoyed the living for upwards of a quarter of a century after Presbyterianism was restored. In this he stood absolutely alone. It was a very common thing to meet in those days with Scotch clergy of the type of the Vicar of Bray, but Mr. Lindsay was true to his creed and its ritual. The reader remembers how, at the Revolution of 1688, when William of Orange gained the English throne, Episcopacy, which had previously (in the time of the Stewarts) been the State religion of Scotland, gave place to Presbyterianism, and the Presbyterian ministers returned jubilant from exile and past suffering, full of memories of political murders, hardship, and Church cruelty, and resolved to root out the High Church party. In no place in Scotland did feeling run so high or so bitterly as in Argyll, which could never forget the execution of its darling Earl upon the scaffold, ostensibly, at least, in the cause of religious freedom and popular rights. In the face of all that, we find here, in the very heart of the Highlands, and in the most bigoted part of the Campbell country, an uncompromising Episcopalian clergyman quietly allowed to hold his living and his creed, just because he was beloved by his savage or half-savage flock. A Presbyterian successor was actually appointed, and came to Glenorchy to take possession, in the hope that the parson would quietly leave the manse and stipend. He got rather an unexpected reception in this Presbyterian glen; he owed all, probably his life, to the generosity and kindness of the parson. On the Sunday when he was to preach himself in, he found the parish literally up in arms, and the parishioners assembled in great force against his settlement. Little ceremony was used by those sons of the mountain, who cared more for the force of a good character than for the refinements of creed, and who never allowed abstract doctrines to stand in the way of personal liking. The invading minister was quickly and quietly surrounded by twelve stalwart Highlanders, with dirks ready and claymores drawn; and thus he was marched off towards the eastern boundary of the parish, with two pipers, playing a sort of appropriate lament, leading in the van, the stalwart sons of the mountain acting as a threatening body-guard, and the hostile congrega-

tion bringing up the rear. At the boundary the procession halted; the unfortunate minister was made to swear that he would never return or attempt to obtain the stipend of Glenorchy, or molest its incumbent so long as he lived or chose to retain the living. And thus it came about that in the very heart of the Liberal Campbell country, and within sight of the great Breadalbane stronghold of Kilchurn, an Episcopalian, who never conformed to the new ecclesiastical *régime*, was allowed to draw the stipend of the conforming minister, and to preach in the parish church, all through the reigns of William and Mary, Anne, and George I., leaving, when he died, a name that is still revered in the glen, and proving how in the very heart of the Highlands a man's personal character was a very much more powerful and enduring element than the dogmatic expression of his creed or the practice of his ritual. And as I visited Mr. Lindsay's grave, and ran through some of what has been written about the stern intolerance and sour bigotry of the Campbells—how they have been represented as a race of duplicity and grasping greed—I thought in particular of the horrors of Glencoe and the reputed treachery of Breadalbane, and I thought that here history spoke in the fact that at their own doors the Breadalbane Campbells were the most tolerant of their day and age.

I have seen Glenorchy in all phases of its scenery: in storm, when the snow-drift hurried across the summit of Ben Cruachan; in flood, when the Orchy overflowed its bank far into the valley, and swept trees and cattle into the depths of Loch Awe; in fair weather, when the clouds passed rapidly across the surface of the sky, trailing their changing shadows across that of the deeply furrowed Ben; when the summer sun shone brightly, and when the change of colouring in the green or dark brown landscape was brilliant and almost kaleidoscopic, and when the power of light and shade was as fully developed as I have ever seen it even on the slopes of Fiesole or of Castelamare. And I have also seen the glen as it shivered beneath a passing thunderstorm on a July eve. The day, I remember, was very sultry and oppressive; several hot blasts of air passed up the glen; towards evening the sky began to darken and change colour rapidly; loud and frequent peals of thunder drew near and nearer; flashes and streaks of forked lightning frequently lighted up the sky, which was in violent change of colouring. I have seen many thunderstorms in Central Europe, amidst the Alps, and on the Mediterranean; but I remember nothing like this Glenorchy storm, with its terrific vibrations, its turgid currents of hot air, its cold blasts, its quick succession of forked lightning, and its violent torrents of rain.

The valley is made up of three glens, branching off: Glen Strae, deep, hollow, and sombre, and yet full of memories of the lawless Mac-Gregors; Glenorchy, rock-bound, green, and grand; and Glen Lochy, bleak, cold, and bare. And each has its own dark history, and its home-spun collection of clan legends, fairy traditions, and fatherless myths.

But by far the most conspicuous object from all parts of the valley is the circular granite monument on the hill at the north-east corner of the lake, erected some years ago to the memory of Duncan Ban M'Intyre, the Burns of the Gaelic proper, and almost their only poet—certainly the sweetest and purest of all Gaelic bards, and the only one amongst them likely to have a permanent pedestal in the great temple

British literature. For if the truth must be told, and the romance attaching to the unknown be swept away, Gaelic poetry, when not appropriated by the local bards from fertile English fields, in the manner in which his sermons are pilfered from Mr. Spurgeon by the modern Highland clergy—who first translate them into Gaelic, and then turn them into English as original productions—seldom rises to an elevated strain or transcends smart scurrility, or the suggestive vagaries of illicit love. A certain class of writers, to whom *omne ignotum pro magnifico* is a pert gospel, has converted the Highlands into a sort of poetic Arcadia, a land of virgin virtue, unsullied morals, and melodious song, where the noble shepherd warbles in his country's muse in happy innocence, or where he tunes his mellow reed to some sweet ancestral air, and where the bard was the leader of local society, exercising supreme influence as much through the force of his native grace and culture as through a dread of his terrible satire and the vehemence of his ready faculty. To these enthusiasts the Highland bard appears as the public satirist and public educator of his day and generation, the literary guide and Mentor of his clan, the stern moralist of his glen, from whose sharp tongue no rank or class, however high or powerful, could escape, and the censor who rebuked the vices of his tribe through the silent vigour of a gospel inspired from the permanent good in the world, and in which the bard peculiarly shared. With these rosy writers it is the fashion to represent the Highlands as *par excellence* the land of mountain and glens, freedom and innocence, where a virtuous peasantry breathes the spirit of a purer air remote from conventional bonds, where the shepherd knows no want and the crofter laughs at care, and where music and morals, religion and poetry, go together to purify and elevate the rustic mind. In a lecture on this very Duncan Ban, the present accomplished Professor of Poetry at Oxford gives countenance to this high-flown fiction of ideal Gaelic civilisation. And yet, if the unvarnished tale must be told, I have found in this glen—and what this glen reveals is corroborated by the local records of all the neighbouring parishes—proof upon proof that the real life during last century amongst those glens was always commonplace, and often mean; that here it was the old melancholy story of the poor in intense poverty, often in a state approaching slavery, or in that of chronic starvation; of the rich semi-brutalised; and generally of a people far remote from the blissful Arcadia of the shieling, who went to market more than to kirk; who periodically broke each other's heads in drunken brawls; who sang coarse topical songs in their cups, and swore at each other in emphatic vernacu-

lar; who were poorly clad as well as badly fed, and who cared little for the Hebrew commandments when they went counter to passion or prejudice.

It is positively refreshing, in the midst of prevailing grossness, to meet a character like Duncan Ban, a genuine Gaelic bard, veritable son of flood and mist, a writer full of grace, purity and strength, rising from amongst the people to touch their hearts and move their best feelings, and to sing the praises of valour and great deeds. Amongst Gaelic bards, who are as numerous as poets in Paisley, or leaves in Vallambrosa, he alone combines strength with purity, and grace of utterance with beauty of thought. Though of the people, a true peasant son, he has none of the spirit of the revolutionary, nor of the spirit of unrest which gives to Robert Burns his principal charm. He was always lowly, always without ambition. He never learned to read or write, and he never had a fair command over English speech, though English was then spoken in his glen by all the more educated people. Born in 1724, he passed a long life of nearly a century as gamekeeper, vicarious soldier, city guardsman in Edinburgh, and privileged vagrant. He married early, and the sweetest strains of his muse are the praises of his own wife, Mairi Bhan Og,

Whose breath was sweet as apples growing.

At seventy-five he entered the well-known city guard of Edinburgh, a body of mountaineers mercilessly caricatured by Ferguson, and hated by the Lowland citizens:—

Their shanks, erst used to philabegs,
Are dight in splatterdashes,
Whose baillant hides scarce fend their legs
Frae weet and weary splashes
O' dirt that day.

In his seventy-ninth year he composed his "Farewell to the Hills," of which the following verses, from the beautiful translation of a sympathetic modern poet, may give some idea of the fire and energy that glowed in his muse:—

Oh, wildly as the bright day gleamed I climbed the mountain breast,
And when I to my home returned the sun was in the west.
'Twas health and strength, 'twas life and joy to wander freely there,
To drink at the fresh mountain stream, to breathe the mountain air.

Farewell, ye forests of the North hills, where the bright day gleams,
Farewell, ye grassy dells, farewell, ye springs and leaping streams,
Farewell, ye mighty solitudes, where once I loved to dwell,
Scenes of my spring-time and its joys, for ever fare ye well.

What was most remarkable in the mood of this Gaelic vagrant bard was his intense love of freedom, of solitude, and of nature, his keen and passionate perception of wild natural beauties, and his attachment to his native glen. By no means wanting in sarcastic power, he could be

vehement when he liked, as well as tender and gentle. Patriotic like all true Highlanders, his thoughts, even in their most vagrant moods, would soon return to the mountain corry and its mist, the swollen stream and its green banks, the antlered deer and the swift roe, the perfume of the birch and the rich down of his native heather, the silver spangles on the Orchy trout, and the golden gleam on the slopes of Ben Cruachan.

Leaving Duncan Ban of the Songs and his native Glenorchy, we follow the railway line as it skirts the shore of Loch Awe into the wild pass of Brander, in some respects the darkest and most forbidding of all the Highland gorges. Loch Awe stretches for nearly thirty miles through a lovely and richly wooded country. In leaving Glenorchy we are passing away from countless McFadgens, McNaughtons, and McGregors, who occupied these valleys in succession before the Campbells became supreme in the West Highlands. Not far from the hotel is the Gallowshills, where the stormy freebooters, McGregors, used to hang their foes and prisoners; but now, as for centuries, one fancies that the glen has no more of this blackmailing clan than the refrain of their wail, which Scott has made immortal :—

Glenorchy's proud mountains, Kilchurn and her towers,
Glenstrae and Glen Lyon no longer are ours,
We're landless, landless, Gregalach.

Kilchurn Castle is one of those solitary massive piles perched on a bold peninsula, or on a rocky isle, that still prove how insecure the life of the Highland chiefs always was. It is now a melancholy ruin, crumbling fast to a more dilapidated state, and very unlike the earliest picture of it that I have seen. At the end of last century, when vandalism was supreme in Europe, the building was unroofed; its timbers were used to cover some of the dwellings of the glen, and its corner-stones carried away for ornaments and gate-posts. But in 1745 we find it habitable, and used as a sort of barracks by some Royalist troops. Built at various dates between 1400 and the reign of James I., it was a heavy, clumsy, and composite, though imposing and picturesque mass of solid masonry, without any evident style or plan. Its commanding situation and the romance of its border history were no doubt the main causes why it was selected by Sir Walter Scott as the site of the Campbell fortress in his *Legend of Montrose*, and which evoked the happy military criticism of the fearless Dugald Dalgetty, Rittmaster with half the armies of Europe. For centuries it belonged to the Campbells, who were supreme on Loch Awe side before they got even a footing on Loch Fyne.

In driving along we got a good view of the clustering isles of Loch Awe, richly wooded down to the water's edge, each wooded isle with its stirring legend or story, and some of them with many. There is Inishail—the island of the fair—a sort of protected paradise in the Gaelic imagination, where once stood a nunnery belonging to the Cistercian Order, and where the parish church of Inishail was the centre of parish life for about a century after the Reformation. There is Inistrynich, the island

of the soothsayers, where no doubt farseeing quacks imposed upon the credulity of the surrounding tribes, and shrouded their roguery in sanctimonious ritual. There is Inis-Fraoch, one of whose legends I have given in a previous page. Further down there is Inischonel, with Ardchonel Castle holdly perched on its rocky summit ; and there are several more of a like type sheltered in the bosom of the lake, and once occupied as keeps or cemeteries. Here, doubtless, was once the theatre of many a tragedy and many a comedy ; here was the refuge for many a disconsolate soul, who had found the world thorny and cold, and here religion disciplined her sons and daughters through suffering, prayer, and piety.

Passing along the margin of the dark lake, in no sense of security I regret to confess, we soon enter the narrow defile of the Pass of Brander, with Ben Cruachan, here well covered with birch, hazel, and scrub oak rising abruptly on our right, and mountain torrents rushing down uncomfortably near. The Pass of Brander is partly formed by a long spur of the lake, and partly by the surging river Awe, which connects the loch with Loch Etive. As I passed along, the waters of the loch were dark and deep ; the dark cliffs on the opposite side were reflected on the still surface, and altogether the scene was one of the eeriest and weirdest I have seen in the Highlands. And interest is aroused at the recollection of the struggles that took place here both between the McDougall of the day and Sir William Wallace, and between the conquering Bruce, representing French or Latin civilisation, and the Lord of Lorne, guarding the economy of the island freebooters and rovers. The whole plain on both sides at the entrance to the Pass is covered by melancholy cairns, memorials of these dire conflicts. In crossing the Awe, we get a good view of Loch Etive, in its deep enclosure of hills, and here at Taynuilt, where there is a light airy station, we are still in the land of legend and song. But, if the truth must be told, this intensely interesting Gaelic section of the country has only the *débris* of its former grandeur to present to the stranger. On all hands, one sees the ruins of homes and *clachans* in melancholy wastes, and in some places the remains of churches and chapels ; but almost all the history connected with these spots has altogether vanished from local memory, and now has only a feeble hold on local tradition. Yesterday I chanced to meet two of the most intelligent men in the parish, but neither could tell me the ecclesiastical name of the spot where we stood, though by that name hangs a pleasant story. The district of Taynuilt is highly interesting, and has a remarkable history. Almost within hearing of the loud murmur of the rapid Awe, we stood facing the broad, brown, massive shoulder of Ben Cruachan ; Ben Starra stands forth boldly and dark, to guard the dark frowning entrance to Upper Loch Etive, which seems to be always shrouded in a thick layer of whitish mist ; granite hills stretch westward, giving shelter to Loch Etive ; and legends of Deirdre, the sons of Uisnach and the Feine, seem to crowd the whole mountain side and to give life to the silent cairns. And yet though I knew how abundant was the crop of Gaelic tales raised on

this spot, I was surprised and grieved to find that even the oldest inhabitant could tell me very little of what had been native of this rugged soil, and that much of what is modern has recently crept into the very topography. I heard Welsh and English spoken by the quarriers and by the descendants of Ulverstone immigrants, who smelted iron ore from Cumberland here upwards of a century and a half ago. That was natural; but the monument did annoy me, by giving a rude shock to my antiquarian simplicity. On a conspicuous eminence beside the parish church, I saw a tall monolith, towering erect, which I at once put down as a good specimen of the memorial cairns of Lorne, but which proved to be, not any relic of Norse or pre-historic civilisation, but only the earliest monument erected in Britain to Britain's greatest naval hero, by a band of enthusiastic Englishmen who were working at the granite quarries of Bonawe, in the memorable year of Trafalgar, when all true Britons lamented the loss, as much as they rejoiced at the victories, of Lord Nelson. Even the name Taynult, the house by the burn, is modern, but Muckairn, the name of the parish, points far back beyond the bounds of Celtic civilisation, and even beyond the verge of written history, to that remote era when vague popular ideas had not yet stereotyped themselves in form, and when troubled man, face to face with the inexplicable difficulties of his own nature and its surroundings, worshipped most loyally what he feared most. The name is in fact one of the many relics of boar or animal worship we have in the Highlands, and belongs to the wide class of legends or myths that surround the patriotic life and sad death of Diarmid, who, if a personage at all, and not a personified idea, was the outstanding social reformer of his race, who opposed the coarse errors of his day, tried to uproot its vulgar prejudices, and, like all great or true reformers, suffered for the opinion which he held and tried to put into practice. Diarmid is always represented as a sort of Celtic Achilles, the greatest hunter, perhaps the most generous-hearted man, amongst all the Feine, at once the surest of aim and the swiftest of foot. Like a second Hercules, as no doubt he was, his greatest achievement was the destruction of a monster, the wild boar, or *great muck*, that ravaged all the country of the Feine, and baffled all their hunters. But not even Diarmid could escape the mysterious shafts of fate; for swift though he was of foot, sure of aim and deep in counsel, he had, like his Greek prototype, a vulnerable spot in his heel, and through that spot his open rival and secret foe resolved to compass his death. Conan, another of the Feine, was jealous of his fame, and, finding that he could not overcome his strength by fair means, fell back upon the resources of craft and cunning. And so he approached Diarmid in the hour of his supreme triumph, with sweet words of flattery, and asked him to measure the boar that he had just slain, so that in all after ages the magnitude of his prowess might be known from that of his deeds. When he measured it, beginning at the head, the bristles yielded to his foot, and he escaped scathless; but when he measured it the reverse way the poisonous bristles

of the boar pierced his foot in the vulnerable spot, and he died; and when his wife, unmatched in beauty, but fated for error and woe, the fair Grian—the sun, light, exposure—heard of the evil that was to be, or had been, she rushed with the sympathy of her heart to her husband; but a random arrow killed her. And then there was a great funeral, and all the hunters of the Feine wept the tears of great sorrow for the brave and the fair. This tale I heard years ago, near this spot, and it was probably gathered up in this region of quaint romance. Surely it is not an idle story or a meaningless tale to any one who considers that myths represent broken or crumbled down historic facts, or half suppressed ideas, who studies the extent to which animal action and a certain definite awe of the animal creation enter into the crude conglomerate stories of the old, but fast expiring, inhabitants of those glens, or who carefully examines the rise of Celtic mythology. The whole collection of the tales of the Sons of Uisnach, as well as all the pathos that surrounds the death of Diarmid, is probably a sun-myth, and is by no means of like origin. I do not suppose that there ever was a historical Deirdre, or a historical Uisnach, or a historical Diarmid, or a historical Ossian, but only a mythic or traditional one, around whom much human association, or even many actual historic events, have gradually clustered. Every notable phenomenon, and every notable aspiration, in this valley, from the source of the Orchy in the wild bleak forest down to its mouth, transfused itself into a tale or a myth, which, though intensely concrete, appeals to the deepest being of every lover of mountain scenery or stirring deeds.

Apart, however, from its prehistoric or semi-mythic associations, from its connection with Deirdre, the great Celtic beauty, from its tales of semi-historical characters like the Sons of Uisnach, from its legendary history of the Feine, its mythical heroes; apart from its circles, monoliths, memorial cairns, and monuments of the dead in such quiet nooks as Clanmacree; apart from its lake dwellings and its aboriginal civilisation; apart from the great vitrified fort at Beregonium and its surroundings; apart from all this and such as this, the district of Loch Etive side has many interests of a recent date, but not of a less striking kind, in corners like the ecclesiastical centre of Ardhattan, where Colin Campbell, perhaps the greatest of all the Campbells, lived and died, and at Dunstaffnage, where Bruce was a visitor. Ardhattan has passed through three distinct stages, Culdee, Catholic, and Presbyterian, each leaving the memory of a notable man or event. Hard by this place is Ballimodan, after St. Modan, a missionary saint, who figures largely during the sixth century in the doubtful records of the South and West of Scotland. One of the notable phenomena of the West Highlands, for many centuries, was the Yellow Bell of Ballimodan, which, amidst an ignorant people, gradually passed for the panacea of the parish and the shire, and which rivalled in point of efficacy the charming-stones now in possession of Mr. Campbell at Ledaig. A pretty legend is attached to this bell. When the sick could not be carried to the bell, in the steeple of Balli-

modan, the bell had to be carried to their dwellings. But unless it was brought back promptly and properly, after its curative work was done, it would fly back of its own accord, high up in the air, playing all the while the merriest and most melodious music ever heard in the parish. The fisherman out at sea and the shepherd in the dusk of the even would often listen to its mysterious music, and know that the yellow bell of the Irish saint was on its errand of mercy.

I pass over the period when Ardochattan was the seat of one of the great priories of the country, from 1261 to the Reformation, in favour of one or two facts of perhaps greater interest to the general reader.

Probably no great Scotchman ever ran down the Scotch more heartily than did Lord Macaulay, who, whether partly of Norse blood or not, was certainly two-thirds a Highlander from Ardochattan. In this graveyard his ancestors lie, not very far away from Glencoe, which to many an indignant Scot is still a synonym for the disloyal historian. Argylemen claim him as a Celt of the Celts. His grandmother was a daughter of Mr. Campbell of Inversragan, a small property in this parish. She married Mr. Macaulay, the uncouth minister of Lismore, then fresh from Uist, but, after ten years' service, to be translated, in 1765, to Inverary, where, at the gate of the Ducal palace, he gathered so much refinement, that even Dr. Johnson speaks very kindly of him.

Of all men connected with this district, the greatest of whom we have any record was undoubtedly Colin Campbell, "ye great mathematician of Argyle," as Lord Murray styled him in an unpublished letter now before me. Mr. Campbell lived first as Episcopalian, and then as Presbyterian, in spiritual charge of this parish, for several reigns, and died Father of his Church in 1726. He seems to have done his ordinary parish work well; but he was really a sober recluse, hard-headed and speculative, immersed in nearly all the professional questions of his day. Men like Sir Isaac Newton and Leibnitz admired his faculty, and deeply regretted that his 'vicious' modesty kept him far away from the current of profitable intellectual life; his capacity for mathematics was well known to a large body of his contemporaries; and his interest in astronomy was so intense that to several of his countrymen, including Lord Murray, he was simply an astrologer swaying the hand of fate. In the district of Ardochattan his memory, chiefly in consequence of this belief, is even still dependent on his marvellous power. As a thinker he was incisive, subtle, and persistent, battling in great problems, and always confident of victory. Some of his conclusions anticipate Berkeley, and others are in the line of Samuel Clarke. This interesting recluse had his joys and his sorrows, and, I suspect, passed a life whose troubles were often fatal to calm meditation. Notwithstanding this, the fragments of his literary work preserved from damp and fire prove that he was one of the most thoughtful Scotchmen of his day, and one of the most accomplished ministers of his Church in any age.

In passing down Loch Etive side the traveller faces terrace behind

terrace, marks of the old sea-beaches, beautifully clothed in rich green and clover, and quite a paradise of sweet perfumes. At Connel the tide-current is very strong, bubbling and boiling past furiously amongst the rocks ; and the old keeps of Dunstaffnage and Dunolly stretch their wild and melancholy history back to the invasion of the Norse Somerlids.

Oban itself is a mongrel little town, pretentious in its architecture, and genteel in all its professions. But it is no part of my present task to describe its scenery or its life. No account of the heart of the Highlands, however, can nowadays be given without some reference to the most ubiquitous of wandering Scots, at present the Gael's great apostle and prophet, and the most picturesque inhabitant of the land of Lorne. For the past ten years Professor Blackie has in Scotland been undoubtedly the most notable and popular, as well as the most picturesque of all Scotchmen, one who in his singularly brilliant career has acted many parts, and, upon the whole, acted them well ; who is equally at home with Homer, Plato, Goethe, Dante, and Duncan Ban of the narrow songs of the glens ; who has insight and shrewdness as much as any of his canny countrymen, and who, if before the public brilliant and ephemeral, is at heart solid and earnest. When the various corners of his intensely versatile and eminently human nature are looked round and round, and when the source of his spasmodic inspiration is understood, he will take his place in Scottish history, not as connected with ephemeral interests and popular problems, but as a speculative and hard-headed Scot, with profound glimpses into the past, though wrapped up in the pressing claims of the present and the future ; a man of unrest and progress, and of wide as well as of solid acquirement. Outwardly he is the most picturesque of his race, inwardly the most youthful and brilliant of his kind.

Love the Debt.

Love that hath us in the net,
Can he pass, and we forget?
Many suns arise and set—
Many a chance the years beget—
Love the gift is Love the debt—
Even so.

CHAPTER I.

IN A TEMPER.



YOU were never asked to the Pickleses before, Mabel?" in the assured tone of a question with but one answer.

"No, Aunt."

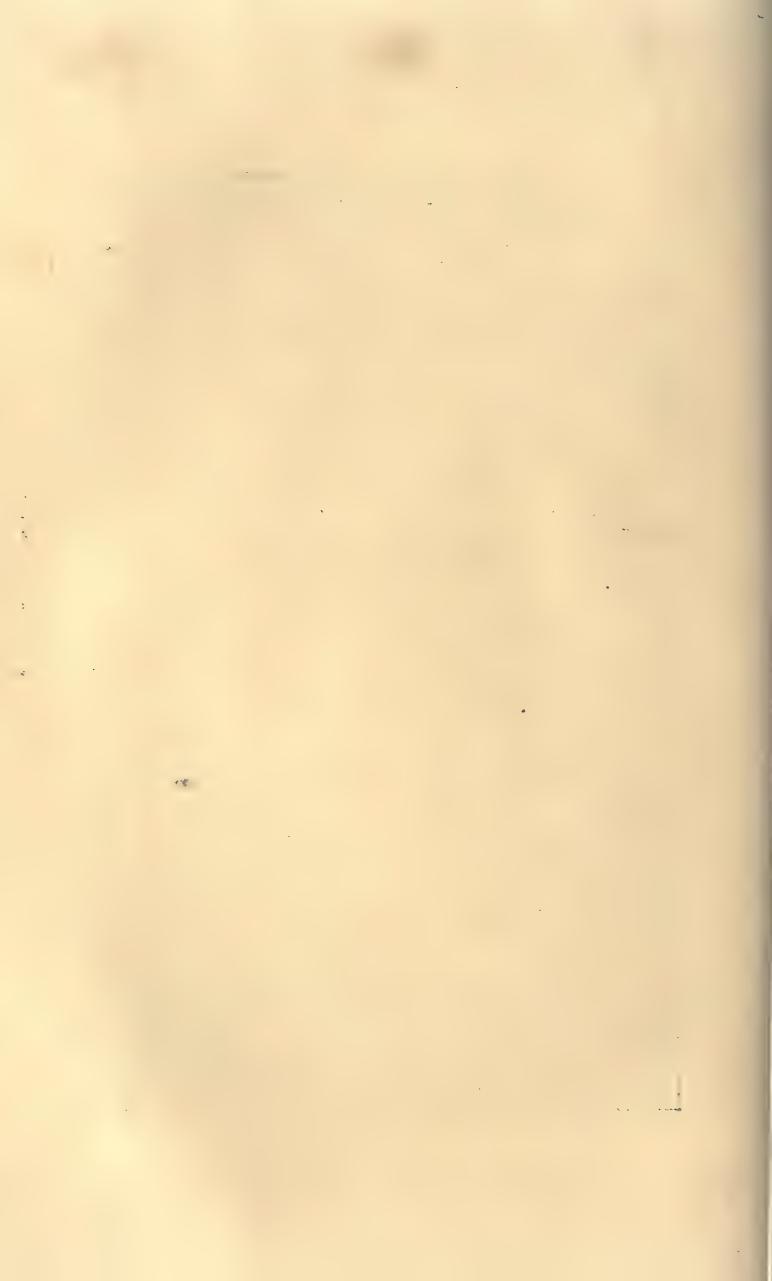
Miss Masters nodded, "I thought so," as plainly as if she had said it, and then read out the invitation she held in her hand. Having read it, folded it up, and put it carefully away, she accounted for it. "I sat beside Mr. Pickles at the Sugdens' the other evening."

"Yes; he's your conquest, Aunt," answered Mabel, nodding and smiling. "At least, he's not mine. He was downright rude to me that evening." Miss Masters was still more gratified. The invitation to her niece was, therefore, the higher compliment to herself. She appropriated it at once without doubt or disguise.

"My dear, he didn't know who you were. You see he's included you in the invitation."



"A FELLOW CAN KEEP OUT OF IT, I SUPPOSE."



"Because he doesn't know who I am?"

Miss Masters would no more take a joke than a counterfeit coin. She nailed this to the counter at once. "Because you are my niece, my dear. I meant that he didn't know you were my niece."

"If I go with you, he'll know it, Aunt. Hadn't I better stay at home and not discredit you?"

"I can't go by myself, Mabel."

"No, Aunt, certainly not. I couldn't permit you. It wouldn't be proper. And if you're bent on going, I suppose I must chaperone you; though I like Mr. Pickles as little as he likes me."

"We must make allowances for him, my dear. He's self-made, you know."

"Then he doesn't do himself credit, Aunt. He's like Margaret's home-made wine—no one but herself can endure it."

"My dear, he's your member!" in the shocked tone in which an old lady, who gave religion the place Miss Masters gave society, would say, "My dear, he's your clergyman!"

"That's just why he should be civil, Aunt. You expect your member, like your grocer, to be civil for the sake of your patronage."

"Not in the South, Mabel. Never in the South."

"Are they never civil in the South, Aunt?"

"Never grocers, my dear, or people of that kind; never. I didn't know Mr. Pickles was a grocer," with a shudder in her voice; "I thought he was a dyer." Miss Masters' stupid mistakes were made, not from mere stupidity, but from inattention also. She never gave more than half of her not very large mind to a subject in which she had no personal concern.

"It's his brother who's the dyer, Aunt. Mr. Pickles is a brewer."

"Oh, a brewer," much relieved. "I thought Mrs. Roxby said a dyer. But brewers are always members, my dear. No one objects to a brewer sitting for anywhere."

"And I don't, Aunt. I only object to his sitting on me. He's welcome to any other seat in England as far as I am concerned. And I shouldn't mind his snubbing so much if he would be snubbed. But he won't," in a lamentable voice. "You might as well prick a rhinoceros with a pin. I wasted the most stinging sarcasms on him the other night when he put his great clumsy foot down on me."

"It's those long skirts, my dear; no one can help treading on them. I think I shall wear my black silk."

"Do, Aunt," persuasively; for her aunt was given to outraging propriety by light, bright and juvenile costumes.

"Yes; I think I shall. I wonder who will be there."

"The Deardens and Matchlocks are sure to be there; and, of course, Mr. Augustus Minnit. He's like that book no gentleman's library should be without, dull and indispensable. And the Milligans, I think; and I hope Miss Menzies."

"What! that plain girl with red hair?"

"Plain, but wholesome, Aunt. Doesn't disagree with you like Miss Sugden, the heiress, who does nothing else. There's no doubt about *her* being there, for Mr. Clarence Pickles' sweet sake."

"My dear, he hardly spoke to her in her own house the other night. I thought it was *you* he was paying attention to."

"My dear Aunt, you don't talk of people paying attention to a moth or a beetle. Mr. Clarence Pickles looked at me so through his eyeglass, as through a microscope, and asked such superior questions about my haunts and habits, that I think he would have stuck a pin through me and put me in a glass case, if his father hadn't set his foot upon me and crushed me." Miss Masters gathered dimly and not without complacency that both father and son had been uncivil to Mabel—"dans l'adversité de nos meilleurs amis nous trouvons souvent quelque chose qui ne nous déplaît pas"—especially when their ill-luck is a foil to our better fortune. Miss Masters' vanity, absorbed and busy as a bee, "gathered honey from the weed."

"He made himself very agreeable to me, my dear."

"Then it was to *you* he was paying attention, Aunt."

"Nonsense, Mabel. I might be his mother," speaking with perfect seriousness.

"So you might, Aunt. Mr. Pickles is a widower."

"Mabel, I shall never marry," slowly and solemnly, as if all her life lay before her, instead of behind her.

"Well, Aunt, I shan't press it. I should be the last person to urge you to marry them if you think they wouldn't make you happy. And, after all, rank isn't everything. 'Josiah Pickles and Son' sounds very well, but it's only a title. What's in a name?"

Miss Masters was little likely to understand irony, especially coming from Mabel, with whom bitterness of any kind was uncommon. What was her horror, then, to hear a scion of the noble stock of Masters talk in this way of people who had sprung out of the mud, and the mud of Wefton! Pah!

"My dear Mabel! Do you know what you are talking about, child? Rank! Who was Mr. Pickles' father?"

"I give it up, Aunt," shaking her head as at a desperate riddle.

"I believe his father was a draper—a *linendraper*," emphatically, as if this was the lowest of a large assortment of kinds of drapers. "So Mrs. Roxby told me. A linendraper in a very small way in Shrimp Lane. I think it's a pity Mrs. Roxby should rake up this old scandal, but there it is. Mrs. Roxby has got a piece of his signboard, she tells me, with Peter Pickles on it. 'Peter Pickles, Linendraper!'" in a low voice of horror.

"But is it safe, Aunt?"

"What, dear?"

"Is it safe to keep evidence like that in the house? Mightn't Mrs. Roxby be taken up at any moment as an accessory after the fact, I think

they call it, if the signboard was found in her possession? If I were she, I should burn it, unless she keeps it as a relic to cure rheumatism."

"What nonsense, Mabel! You know as well as I that Mrs. Roxby can't bear the Pickleses because they won't know her."

"It's charitable of Mrs. Roxby, then, to be at such pains to know them. It is enough for most people to know Josiah Pickles and Son without going farther back."

"But she doesn't know them, my dear. That's it. It's spite, don't you see?"

"Well, Aunt, it's very bad; but, after all, it was Mr. Pickles' father who so disgraced himself. Mr. Pickles himself has broken with this bad past and become a brewer, and may sit for anywhere, and so we find the noble clay of the linendraper stopping a bung-hole. Don't you think, Aunt, Mrs. Roxby had better let bygones be bygones?"

"I quite agree with you, my dear. It's not a thing to talk about. We should be only too thankful that there's nothing of the sort in *our* family," as though it was epilepsy or insanity of which she was speaking.

"I don't know, Aunt. If we cut Mrs. Roxby I fear she'd find some horrible ancestor for us 'who disappeared about the time of the assizes.' We all have so many ancestors, you know, if you go a bit back; and do what you can you can't keep them all select. There might be even a linendraper amongst them. I mean," correcting herself at a shocked look from her aunt, "I mean in the old days, when the business wasn't so dreadful. Izaak Walton, for instance, was a linendraper."

"A linendraper! Certainly not. Not among the Masterses, at least. This Mr. Walton must have been on your mother's side, Mabel. I know nothing about her family. I believe they were in trade, but I never inquired," with an air of immense magnanimity.

"Aunt, I can conceal it from you no longer. My grandfather was a coal-merchant!"

"My dear," said Miss Masters, after a pause, speaking slowly, and as one who weighed well weighty words. "My dear, I don't think coal is such a disgrace. It's better than soap—a good deal better than soap—and nearly as good as sugar."

"But not as good as beer, Aunt?"

"Beer! My dear, beer comes very near land!"

"Oh!"

"Yes, very near land, and marries into the peerage." Miss Masters, after the fashion of her sex, was generalising from a single instance—that of one of the members for her own county.

"That's unfortunate for Miss Sugden. With Mr. Clarence Pickles she has no chance against the peerage."

"Oh, Mr. Pickles! I was speaking of very big brewers, Mabel."

"Not of very small beer, Aunt? There is hope still, then, for the heiress. I have set my heart upon her marrying Mr. Clarence Pickles."

"Why, dear?"

"To kill two birds with one stone, Aunt." Leaving her aunt to digest this bloodthirsty sentiment, the young lady—who all this time had been standing, dressed for going out—took up a bulky satchel from the table and quitted the room.

Our heroine is unfortunate in the moment of her introduction—one of the rare moments in which she could even appear to be flippant and ill-natured. No doubt her banter of her aunt appears unbecoming, and her bitterness against Messrs. Pickles and Son unamiable; but it really was not possible to be serious with Miss Masters; while the Pickleses—father and son—had been exasperating. The father had been insolently uncivil, because the son had been insolently civil, to Mabel, and because he thought, and let her see he thought, that she had encouraged the young gentleman's intolerable attentions. And this was not the sole or chief cause of her disgust with them. The satchel she has just carried out with her was bulky with supplies for the sick child of Mr. Pickles' niece. This poor woman had been left destitute by the death of her husband of "woolsorter's disease"—a common and sudden form of death in Wefton—and, after a vain appeal for help to her uncle, had been forced to go to the mill, to the neglect of her child, who thus became one of Mabel's little patients. Mabel, therefore, was wroth with Mr. Pickles—most unreasonably, as that gentleman's reply to the appeal for help showed. He refused simply on principle. His niece's father had drunk himself to death, and he had not the least doubt that her husband had hastened his death by drinking; and therefore he Mr. Pickles—the brewer who owned all the lowest public-houses in Wefton—could not encourage intemperance by relieving the widow and daughter of drunkards. He refused, in fact, on high moral grounds. But women, it is well known, have no conception of justice or principle, but are creatures of feeling alone; and Mabel, therefore, was rather disgusted than delighted with the admirable morality of the letter. She forgot, too, that Mr. Pickles, since his candidature, was a philanthropist; and that, as cosmopolitans are lovers of every country but their own, so philanthropists, since the days of Rousseau, have been lovers of every family but their own. Indeed, at this very time Mr. Pickles was building a Working Men's Institute, at a cost of 3,000*l.*; and was, therefore, little likely to be heartless—unless on principle.

Mabel, then, was not in charity with the Pickleses, and was put as much out of temper as she could be by the prospect of having to accept their invitation. She knew her aunt too well to have a hope of escaping it. Go she must; and, as the leek was to be eaten, it was only human nature to swear. We should be sorry, however, if our readers started with the impression, which her caustic wit and keen sense of the ridiculous gave many of her friends, that there was nothing serious in her, or to her. Beneath the rippling surface lay unsuspected feelings, secret from their sacredness and silent from their depth. The girl, for instance, was religious in her own peculiar way. She did not, indeed, attend

daily services, or embroider stoles, or distribute tracts ; but, from a religious motive, she often bridled a restive tongue, and always felt remorse if it ran away with her ; and she visited the sick children of the poor in her neighbourhood in a manner so furtive and felonious that her nearest friends had no suspicion of her eccentricity. In extenuation of a taste which may be thought morbid in a girl of nineteen, we must explain, in the first place, that she had no brothers or sisters, no mother, and, to all intents and purposes, no father—for the gentleman who stood to her in that relation took less interest in her than in any of the many pamphlets of which also he was the author ; and, in the second place, she did not allow these visits to interfere with her proper work in the world ; for she played, sang, and went to balls, picnics, and parties, as assiduously as the most exemplary young lady in Wefton.

There was one other singularity of hers, due also to her isolated life, of which her Wefton friends had as little suspicion. She was portentously learned. The number and kind of books she read to please her father would have satisfied a Civil Service Commissioner ; yet she so concealed her learning as to seem, to all of one sex, and some even of the other, the most agreeable and accomplished young lady in Wefton. How far this estimate of her mind was affected by her face we shall not undertake to say. It was a singularly interesting face ; in repose restful, thoughtful, truthful, like the ideal quaker face. Her clear grey eyes seemed to look straight through you, and you seemed to look straight through them to the pure soul behind. It was a face in which sweetness and light shone together, and her little patients seemed to read in it, as in a commentary, the meaning of the gospel stories she told them.

A sweet attractive kind of grace,
A full assurance given by looks ;
Continual comfort in a face,
The lineaments of gospel books.

As she left the house, Mabel, after her manner, was moved with remorse for her bitterness of speech—a remorse which was somewhat quickened on her reaching Mrs. Mathers', and learning that Mr. Pickles had sent her a load of coals, which she had never got. It had been shot into the cellar of a Mrs. Flynn, an Irish widow and washerwoman, who lived in the next house but one above. Mrs. Flynn ascribed the mis-carriage to Providence ; saying, with much unction, that "if Mr. Pickles didn't know where to send a load of coals, God did." Her offensively defensive manner, however, suggested that it was one of those cases to which Joan of Arc's proverb applies—"Ayde-toi, Dieu te aydera." Indeed, there was little doubt that Mrs. Flynn had misled the carter by taking the name, for the nonce, of Mrs. Mathers. But the thing was done, and couldn't be undone, at least according to the disinterested Mrs. Flynn. For, in the first place, the coals were all gone ; in the second place, they were all dust and would blow away if they were stirred ; in the third place, they were all slates, and went off

up the chimney like the crack of a gun—and small blame to them, since, as slates, they were more at home on the roof than in the grate. These reasons seemed to cover the case pretty completely; but, nevertheless, Mrs. Flynn thought it necessary to reinforce them by adding significantly, and with arms akimbo, that if there was no coal in her cellar, there was a coal-hammer there, and any one was welcome to it who came prying and prowling about her premises. Mrs. Mathers, being a meek person, and preferring to have rather her coals than her brains scattered about Mrs. Flynn's cellar, made no more ado about the matter except to Mabel. Mabel, however, who was not a meek person, was so moved by the double motive of anger and pity, that she set out at once to see Mr. Pickles' agent, by whom, it seemed, the coals had been sent—one among many hundreds of loads which were distributed among the poor, because of the approach of winter, according to Mr. Pickles—of the elections, according to every one else. Only the outrageous Mrs. Flynn could have roused Mabel to this enterprise, from which she shrank more and more as she drew nearer the agent's office. At the door she hesitated for full a minute, but at last mustered courage to ring. In another minute she found herself in the office and face to face with Mr. Clarence Pickles!

Mr. Clarence Pickles seemed somehow all eyeglass. It gave his face all the expression it had, and, indeed, all it had any title to have, for it expressed the dominant idea of his mind—contemptuous wonder at the existence of any one else in the world besides himself. He used it, as Mabel suggested, as an entomologist uses a microscope—to examine creatures infinitely below himself in the scale of creation; and he looked through it now at Mabel as she entered as at a more than usually interesting specimen. He had no doubt at all—not the least—that, whatever her ostensible errand to his agent's, the real motive of her visit was the hope of seeing himself. He had fascinated her the other evening, and filled her with the fond hope of fascinating him. And so she had, too; the finest girl in the West Riding, by Jove, bar none. And here she was, fluttering after him, like a moth about a candle! She had watched him into the office—not a doubt of it—and had followed for a little flirtation. And she should have it too, egad!

A single look in Mabel's face would have satisfied any one in the world but Mr. Clarence Pickles that such a motive or action was as infinitely beneath her as—Mr. Clarence Pickles himself. But there are people who, like Narcissus, can look into the purest fountain and see—not all heaven reflected—but only the image of themselves.

"Miss Masters! Come in. How do? 'Gad, I was in luck to turn in here this morning. Come in. Take a seat."

"Isn't Mr. Long in?" faltered Mabel.

"Long? No, he isn't. Won't I do?" with a self-complacent grin that was nauseous to Mabel.

"No, thank you. Good morning."

"No, but I say, you're not going? It's all right; Long will be here presently," standing between her and the door.

"Thank you, I can't wait."

"Oh, yes, you can, for a minute, eh?" Mr. Clarence Pickles' manner was insufferably familiar, but Mabel thought it ridiculous to put on tragedy airs with such a creature.

"May I trouble you to open the door, Mr. Pickles?"

"Come, I say, Miss Masters, you can't be so cruel. To come in only to go out, you know. Such a disappointment, you know. You forget me."

"I think you forget yourself, Mr. Pickles. Allow me to pass."

"Here's Long," said Clarence, sulkily, as the outer door was heard to open. In another moment Mr. Pickles senior entered. He took in the situation at a glance. It was an assignation, that was plain enough, and Long had been got rid of as *de trop*. He looked from one to the other—savagely at Clarence, insolently at Mabel. She felt her cheeks burn with a blush of indignation which made Mr. Pickles' assurance doubly sure.

"Oh, Miss Masters! You've come on business?"

"I came to see Mr. Long."

"It's very unfortunate he should happen to be out," with an undisguised sneer. "On business, of course?"

"Yes, on business," looking Josiah straight in the face with a fearless defiance that exasperated him. Any kind of contradiction, or opposition, or exhibition of spirit was intolerable to him.

"No doubt my son did as well; better, perhaps. As a principal in the firm, it would be more his business than Mr. Long's, I dare say."

"Certainly, it was more his business than Mr. Long's. It was about the relief of his cousin, Mrs. Mathers." Mabel, though at white heat at Josiah's transparent insinuations, spoke with a cutting calmness. But Josiah, so far from seeming disconcerted, turned savage.

"It may be his business, but it's hardly yours, Miss Masters. Perhaps you will permit us to look after our relatives ourselves."

"It's just what I came to ask you to do, Mr. Pickles. Your agent sent Mrs. Mathers a load of coals which was delivered at the wrong house. I came to ask Mr. Long to see the mistake set right. It was hardly my business, as you say; but Mrs. Mathers had no idea you were looking after her yourselves. Good morning, Mr. Pickles."

CHAPTER II.

REVENGE.

WHEN Mabel had swept out of the office, the torrent of Josiah's wrath was turned upon Clarence.

"Look here, Clarence, this is no place for assignations."

"No, it's too public," in the languid drawl he found most effective

with his father, who thought its insolence the essence of gentlemanliness.

"Public or private, it's not the place for them, and they mustn't be made again; do you hear?"

"Better tell Long, eh?"

"What's Long to do with it?"

"More than I have, I should say."

"Do you mean that you made no assignation with that girl?"

"Gad, she's a likely girl to make an assignation with," exclaimed Clarence with unusual vivacity. He was beginning to get a dim idea of Mabel.

"What brought her here, then?" asked Josiah, whose suspicions were shaken, not by Clarence's words, but by his manner.

"She's told you, hasn't she? She came about that Mrs. What-you-call-her. Here's Long; you'd better send him to see if she hasn't come straight from there;" for Clarence was curious upon this point himself.

Long was accordingly despatched to make inquiry into this matter and redress Mrs. Mathers' grievance, if there was one. Mr. Pickles had now no doubt that the meeting of Mabel and Clarence was an accident.

"Clarence, I'll treble your allowance if you marry with my approval. Blood or money, you can have the pick of the market. Whom has your aunt asked for the sixteenth?" Josiah regarded parties as markets where his son was to pick up a bargain if he could.

"Oh, the Deardens, Matchlocks, Milligans, and that lot, I believe."

"Dearden is too high-stepping. He'll be down some day, mark my words. That girl will be in the gutter again. Is Miss Sugden coming?"

"She's sure to come. She's everywhere," in an aggrieved tone.

"Fifty thousand pounds safe isn't everywhere, I can tell you. A good figure, too," speaking of her fortune.

"I don't know what you call a good figure," exclaimed Clarence, roused to animation by this outrageous statement. "She's as broad as she's long."

"What's her length or breadth got to do with it?" cried Josiah, exasperated by the introduction of this irrelevant consideration. "She's the safest fortune in Weston."

"I don't think her fortune's as safe as you imagine. Mattock says there's not half of it in safe bottoms."

"Mattock's an ass. I know where every penny of it is; and I can tell you, you might do a deal worse than Miss Sugden—a great deal worse. Is that Miss Masters coming?"

"She's likely to come now!" growled Clarence sulkily.

"There's an end to that business, then," rejoined Josiah with much complacency.

"I don't think there's an end to the business at all. Her father is one of those writing fellows, and he'll have us in all the papers."

"I thought he was a half-pay colonel."

"Yes, he's a half-pay colonel, but he writes for all that. He's always writing some rot or other in the *Weston Witness*. He'll be glad to get hold of this, you may be sure."

This was a palpable hit of Clarence's, for Josiah was not safe in his seat, and a little thing this way or that would upset him at the next election. He had lost ground with the Liberal party (which had returned him) because he was too large-minded a man to represent a single party, or even a single constituency. What he set himself to represent was the country at large. When the country at large wavered between the Liberals and Conservatives, Josiah wavered; but when the country at large inclined decidedly to the Conservatives Josiah took up a decided Conservative stand. The local Liberals, who sent Josiah to Parliament, are too narrow to see things from this imperial standpoint, and threaten to unseat him at the next election. Let us hope that in the meantime those in high places who look on things "with larger, other eyes than ours," and can appreciate Josiah's sacrifice of party to patriotism, will honour his disinterestedness with the baronetcy it has earned.

Josiah, therefore, through not being the man

To narrow his mind,

And to party give up what was meant for mankind,

lost favour with the Liberals, who were the majority in *Weston*, and had a very precarious hold on his seat. A slight access of unpopularity, such as would be caused by the publication of this scandal of the neglect of his niece, would ensure his defeat at the next election.

"I don't know what business it is of hers or his," snarled Josiah, with much asperity. Clarence maintained a discreet silence. He was very anxious that this pretty quarrel should be made up, but he knew that to betray his anxiety would be to ensure what it feared.

"That fellow King has been going right round, lately," resumed Josiah. King, the editor and proprietor of the *Weston Witness*, had stuck staunchly to his colours; but Josiah was under a like delusion to that which makes the sun seem to us to be going right round—he was going right round himself. "Tell Long to make the woman an allowance of ten shillings a week," he growled at last, going towards the door.

"And these Masterses? Hadn't we better let her hear of it from them to stop their tongues?"

"No, confound them, let them do their worst now," slamming the door behind him.

Nevertheless Clarence sat down forthwith and penned an ample and all but abject apology in his father's name to Miss Masters; thanking her for bringing the case under their notice, and begging her to be "good enough to inform Mrs. Mathers of the allowance she was to have weekly from Mr. Long."

Clarence was proud of his diplomacy, and with some reason; for there was not the least foundation for the fear with which he influenced his father. It is true that Colonel Masters "misused King's press damnably," but only for dreary discussions on scientific subjects. He cared no more for politics than a Laputan. Besides, even Clarence felt that Mabel was above the meanness of the revenge he had suggested. So Clarence was proud of his diplomacy, and of his letter too—not a brilliant production—which he forwarded forthwith by special messenger. Thus it came about that a little more than an hour after her return home Clarence's apology came into Mabel's hands. She had returned mortified and humiliated, not least for her own part in a scene which seemed to her simply degrading. And there was still further humiliation in store for her when she attempted to induce her aunt to decline the invitation. Her aunt had no notion of declining an invitation from an M.P., even though his father had been a linendraper. It was little use for Mabel to say generally that both father and son had again been grossly rude to her; she had to come down to particulars and go over a scene, which, to go over even in thought, was like holding a burn to the fire. The only point in the story, however, which fascinated Miss Masters' attention was that with which Mabel started, that Mr. Pickles' niece was a factory hand. At this point she made a dead set and followed Mabel no farther.

"He has asked her?" aghast.

"Whom, Aunt?"

"This niece. My dear, you are quite right, it is most insulting. I shall certainly not go to meet such people."

Mabel sat silent. What hold could she get on a mind like this?

"Really it is not safe to go anywhere in these towns, not anywhere—not even to the house of the member," Miss Masters resumed in a fume.

"He has not asked his niece, Aunt. You will meet no one there lower than Mr. Pickles himself."

"My dear Mabel, you said this moment that Mr. Pickles had sent her and some low Irishwoman an invitation."

"Not exactly an invitation, Aunt—a load of coals."

"Oh! But why should we cut him for that? He has to do something for these people to keep them quiet and hush the scandal up. You are too particular, my dear. It doesn't do to be too particular in the North."

"I was trying to explain, Aunt," said Mabel, after a pause of despair, "that Mr. Pickles and his son were very rude to me when I went to their office."

"To their office! But what took you to their office, my dear?"

"I went to set right this mistake about the load of coals."

"I must say, then, Mabel, that you deserved it. Why shouldn't Mr. Pickles send her a load of coals, even if she was his niece?"

"Oh, dear," groaned Mabel, yet laughing in spite of herself. "The

mistake was not in sending the coals, but in delivering them. They were delivered at the wrong house, and I went to see Mr. Long to have the mistake set right, and found only Mr. Clarence Pickles in the office, and his manner wasn't pleasant; and then Mr. Pickles himself came in—But I can't go over it all again;” flushing at the recollection of the scene.

It was as well that Mabel didn't put herself to the pain of going over it all again, for Miss Masters' mind, being slow working and given to hanging fire, was still stuck dead at the load of coals. It was busy and perplexed about Mabel's fervent interest in it, and in low things and persons generally. She had a kind of dim idea that Mabel, through her grandfather, must have coal in the blood.

“I still think, Mabel”—with the air of having given the most patient and dispassionate attention to Mabel's statement of her side of the question—“I still think, Mabel, that Mr. Pickles wasn't to blame for sending a load of coals to his niece, whatever she was.”

“Well, perhaps not, Aunt. He may have meant it kindly,” giving up the hopeless battle for the present. “Against stupidity the very gods fight in vain.”

Before she could renew it on a more favourable field, Clarence's letter came, and she hurried off at once to tell the good news to Mrs. Mathers; while Miss Masters had the presence of mind to take the opportunity of her absence to write and send to post her acceptance of the invitation.

“Well, my dear, I have written to accept the invitation,” she said, with perfect complacency, on Mabel's return.

“Has it gone?”

“Yes; Jane took it to the post. I was very glad, dear, that I got you to agree with me about it.”

Mabel took this thing characteristically. She had brought it on herself and richly deserved it. Mr. Pickles had done his penance, and she had to do hers. Besides, not to have accepted the invitation would have been construed into not accepting what was certainly a most ample apology. So Mabel tried to reason herself into resignation—not successfully. She looked forward to this dread party with a mixed feeling of disgust and dismay. And yet, as so often happens, it turned out to be one of the pleasantest parties she ever enjoyed, though from no fault of her hosts. They were not pleasant hosts. They were too conscious, and made their guests too conscious, of their being superior beings. Josiah, for instance, is, we will not say overbearing, but overpowering, in conversation. He divides human knowledge exhaustively into two categories—things he knows, and things not worth knowing. If you talk to him upon things he knows, he cannot help showing you that your opinion is worthless; if you talk to him upon things he does not know, he cannot help showing you that your knowledge is worthless; so that he is not a social success. Nor is Clarence. He is as like his father as a photograph of a portrait in oils

is like the original—that is, a mechanically correct, but vacant copy, all the colour, expression, life and soul wanting. Clarence's idea of gentlemanliness was contempt. It had been shown to him by the acknowledged leaders of fashion in Oxford (where he stayed to be plucked for his Smalls), and he showed it in Wefton, bettering the instruction. This made him an even more unsatisfactory host than his father. As for Miss Pickles, the aunt, an entertainment meant to her just what it means on a signboard—provision for man and beast. Her work began and ended with the kitchen, and when she was not in the kitchen, or its purlieu, in person, she was there in thought, which made her absent-minded and given to answer in monosyllables, and at random, in the drawing-room. It was through no fault of her hosts, therefore, that Mabel enjoyed this party; for Mr. and Miss Pickles paid her no attention at all, and Clarence too much. Nevertheless, she did enjoy it greatly, owing not a little to the presence at it of a young divine—Rev. George Kneeshaw. He was one of the curates of the parish church, but not in the least like other curates of Mabel's acquaintance. He was neither prig, priest, nor coxcomb—the three varieties she had hitherto known (for Wefton was not fortunate in its curates)—but just a gentleman who happened to be a clergyman.

Mabel thought him clever and amusing, perhaps, in some degree, because he plainly thought her so; for even the least vain prefer the friends, as they prefer the mirrors, that give back the most flattering reflections of themselves. And the sweet and subtle flattery of the deference of Mr. Kneeshaw's manner was the more attractive by contrast with Mr. Clarence Pickles' patronage. Mr. Kneeshaw, on his part, encountered Mabel with a surprise not flattering to the daughters of the land.

"Have you been long in Wefton, Miss Masters?"

"That's a disingenuous way of asking my age, Mr. Kneeshaw. I shall not fall into the trap."

"Lived all your life here?" with unfeigned surprise.

"All that I remember of it. It's very dreadful, I know," with a shocked shake of the head.

"Very—for Wefton." Mr. Kneeshaw's eloquent dark eyes interpreted the irony of this ungallant speech into the highest compliment. It was a happy form of inoffensive flattery.

"There's a great deal of pity wasted on Wefton, Mr. Kneeshaw. We shouldn't have known we were so wretched if it wasn't for the missionaries who are good enough to come to enlighten us," with a bow to Mr. Kneeshaw's cloth.

"Ah, it's use; you are so used to its wretchedness you don't feel it, Miss Masters. 'Our torments in length of time become our elements,' you know."

"Or is it 'The mind is its own place,' etc.? You might at least give us credit for being jolly under difficulties."

A young lady capping quotations from "Paradise Lost" sounds formidable, but it is more the manner than the matter of a quotation which gives it an appearance of pedantry; and in Mabel's easy manner there was not the least consciousness of learning or cleverness.

Mr. Clarence Pickles, who haunted Mabel persistently, though he felt himself for the most part "out of" the conversation, gathered generally that Wefton was being abused by Mr. Kneeshaw, and was wroth. It is true no one abused the place so liberally as himself. Like most Weftonians, in conversation with a stranger he turned queen's evidence against his native town to escape being confounded in a common condemnation with it. Just as Jimmy Button, the Fuegian, abused his countrymen to Mr. Darwin: "All bad men—know nothing—d—fools."

But if Mr. Clarence Pickles' abuse of Wefton was indirect exculpation of himself, any one else's abuse of it was indirect condemnation of him, and was resented accordingly. Besides, his wrath had been gathering blackly all the afternoon against this prig of a curate, who had made himself most offensive by his monopoly of Mabel.

"If Wefton is such a hole, a fellow can keep out of it, I suppose. He's not forced to come here, or stay here, eh?"

Here was a startling explosion from one's host!

"We come as 'missionaries,' you know, Miss Masters," said Mr. Kneeshaw pleasantly, turning towards Mabel after an amazed look at Clarence. Clarence's temper was not improved by his being ignored.

"To parties?" he sneered; for the curates of Wefton were gay.

"Well, one may meet savages who need civilising even at parties;" this time addressing himself directly to Clarence, but still keeping to the tone of good-tempered banter.

"They're not likely to be asked more than once," retorted Clarence with a readiness which surprised himself.

"And don't deserve to be if they insult their host intentionally, Mr. Pickles," said Mr. Kneeshaw, who was ashamed for himself and distressed for Mabel at this supremely silly encounter. "I'm sorry you took seriously a little chaffing abuse of Wefton; but, you know, every one abuses the town he's quartered in as a matter of course; though, as you say, he wouldn't stay here if he didn't like it." Mr. Kneeshaw's apology, which to Mabel seemed magnanimous, seemed mean to Clarence, who could imagine no other motive for stooping than the hope of avoiding a blow. Having, however, no sharper missile ready, he turned on his heel, muttering, perfectly audibly, "Confounded cad!"

"I think it's time for me to go," said Mr. Kneeshaw, turning to Mabel with a look of mixed amusement and amazement.

"And for me, too," said Mabel, who did not look either amused or amazed, but disgusted merely. Mr. Kneeshaw saw her and her aunt off, and then went home, thinking a good deal about the quarrel, but this above all, that it seemed to bring him nearer the most charming girl he

had ever met. He could afford, therefore, to forgive Mr. Clarence Pickles. Besides, he had his revenge the very next day.

Next day, as he was going through one of the narrow lanes of Wefton, he stopped to make a ragged child he knew happy with one of those gaily coloured balloons which are hawked through low neighbourhoods. It was an unlucky present. For, as the little wretch ran flaunting it in triumph up the middle of the street, he frightened with it Mr. Clarence Pickles' horse. It stopped, backed, turned half round, till a savage lash of the whip sent it bounding in mad panic down the street. In a moment it had knocked down and run over the child, reached the corner of the street, and, instead of turning with the road to the left, ran straight on along a short cut for foot passengers to the Lancashire and Yorkshire station. The path was broad enough till it crossed the railway cutting by a wooden bridge of three planks forty feet above the line; so that, whether the horse took the bridge, or the brow of the cutting at either side, destruction was certain. The groom had the presence of mind to leap off, and escaped with a couple of broken ribs, but Clarence seemed too bewildered to do more than cling to the broken reins. Kneeshaw, who was on the bridge, looked round when he heard the shout, and saw the trap just as it was dashing from the street into the footway. He ran back to leave between him and the bridge a margin for the struggle, and had a moment's pause for breath before he sprang at the reins. He missed them, was knocked down, but brought the horse down too. It was not a romantic mode of stopping a runaway horse, as by a stumbling block, but it was effective.

Clarence was at first too unnerved to swear at the officious crowd which gathered round them in a moment, though he had the presence of mind to intercept some brandy meant for Kneeshaw. Indeed, he needed it the most of the two. Kneeshaw, who had no bones broken, and did not yet feel his bruises, was giving collected orders to the men who were busy about the fallen horse, while Clarence was shivering as in an ague. The brandy, however, so restored him to himself that he was soon able to abuse the men who were cutting the traces as a set of bunglers, his groom as a confounded coward, and the child he had run over as an infernal little beggar's brat.

A man has naturally a very kindly feeling towards any one whose life he has just saved, but this Clarence soon dissipated.

"Look here, Mr. Pickles," said Kneeshaw, quitting the horse's head to come up to the side of the trap, "if you can't thank God for your life except by swearing, you'd better hold your tongue." And, without waiting to catch Clarence's muttered reply, he walked back to look after the child that was run over.

On the other hand, a man must be very generous to feel duly grateful for so big a debt as his life; and as Clarence's failing was not generosity, it would surprise no one who knew human nature to hear that he was not brought to feel more kindly towards Kneeshaw through the mortifying consciousness of owing him what he never could pay.

CHAPTER III.

REV. GEORGE KNEESHAW.

"ISN'T Mr. Kneeshaw down yet?" asked Mr. Gant, in an aggrieved voice.

"No, sir," replied the little maid; "but I think he is getting up, and will be down in a few minutes. Will you step in, sir?"

"Thank you, I shall go up to his room," said Mr. Gant curtly.

Mr. Gant, the senior curate of the parish church of Wefton, was righteously enraged with his colleague, whose weddings he had had to take that morning. It was Mr. Kneeshaw's week of surplice duty, but as he lived a mile from the church, and did not turn up that morning for the weddings, the clerk had natural recourse to Mr. Gant, whose lodgings were at hand. Now nothing tried Mr. Gant's easily turned temper more than weddings as they were conducted at the parish church. A marriage, which was a piece of business to the clerk and an entertainment to the bridal party, was a sacrament to him, and seldom was one celebrated by him without the clashing of these conflicting views. This morning, especially, the profanity of the clerk in treating the weddings as a piece of business, and of the bridal party in treating them as occasions of unseemly rejoicing, had been flagrant and exasperating. Therefore Mr. Gant spoke sharply to the little maid, and strode sternly upstairs.

"Kneeshaw!" he cried aloud, as he stumbled over the boots at that gentleman's door. "Kneeshaw, I say!"

A profound snore was the response.

Having knocked twice impatiently at the door, with no better result, Mr. Gant turned the handle and entered the room. His first step landed him in the bath, his next on a pile of books. Resting here for a moment till his eye grew used enough to the dimness to steer him clear through the confusion of books, boots, bath, clubs, and dumb bells which littered the floor, Mr. Gant picked his way to the bedside. Here a chair, with a candle burnt to the socket and a volume of natural history upon it, showed for what Mr. Kneeshaw had borrowed from sleep the hours he was now paying back with interest. The truth is, that, partly from the excitement and partly from the pain of last night's adventure, Mr. Kneeshaw couldn't get asleep till the small hours of the morning.

"Kneeshaw!" cried Mr. Gant, shaking the sleeper sharply by the shoulder. "I say, Kneeshaw!"

"Is that you, Gant?" muttered Mr. Kneeshaw sleepily. "What's the matter?"

"Matter! Do you know what o'clock it is?"

"I suppose a man must be wide awake to know what o'clock it is,"

growled Mr. Kneeshaw, with mild but ill-timed facetiousness. "Do you want me to take your matins for you?"

Now Mr. Gant's six-o'clock matins, as he termed that mechanical monologue, which he pattered over in an empty school-house at the rate and with the expression appropriate to "This is the house that Jack built," was a sore subject between these uncongenial colleagues.

"No," said the exasperated Gant; "but I don't want to take your weddings for you; and you must allow me to say that it is a scandal and a disgrace to a priest to set such an example of sloth."

"Well, I don't know," yawned the imperturbable Kneeshaw, as he sat up and stretched himself. "What saith the Psalmist, 'Let the saints rejoice in their beds'? I don't call it rejoicing in your bed to get up at five o'clock. All the same, Gant, I am sorry I overslept myself, and let you in for the weddings. Pay you in funerals next week. Stay and have some breakfast, will you?"

"Thank you, I have breakfasted," replied Mr. Gant sourly, retreating before his colleague's coolness with an irritating sense of impotence. "I have my sick to see after. Good morning."

"Good morning. I say, would you mind telling Fritters I shall be down in half an hour?"

"Fritters" was Mr. Kneeshaw's name for the little maid, in allusion to her person and toilet generally, which were scant and snippety, but especially to her mode of dressing her hair. Fritters, by the way, a maid-of-all-work of twelve years, took the name from him, as she would have taken anything from him, very kindly, but resented its use by another.

Mr. Gant being gone, Mr. Kneeshaw lay in bed a little with his thoughts turned naturally upon his colleague. "What a prig that fellow is! He has cultivated his natural dulness by reading dull books till he has become so stultified as to think himself clever. Yet the fellow never really thinks or studies. He cannot maintain or even understand an argument, and cannot construe correctly a chapter in the Greek Testament. He crept through a theological college, was ploughed for deacon's orders, and passed a year afterwards only by cribbing and copying. Yet the bishop's hands were no sooner off his head than he claimed a reverence for himself that he would be the last to yield the bishop. It is good to hear him show up the ignorance of the chaplain who plucked him, and the profanity of the bishop who ordained him on the strength of an apostolic succession that has changed nothing in him but his dress. He may well hold on by apostolical succession," said Mr. Kneeshaw; "it's all he has to boast of. If a man has no natural claims on our respect, he must fall back on supernatural claims. If the O'Mulligan had been less out at elbows, he would have bragged less of his descent from Brian Boroo. That forged draft was all the cash he had."

Having thus established to his satisfaction a natural connection be-

tween silliness and ritualism, Mr. Kneeshaw addressed himself to his toilet.

Meantime Mr. Gant, on his way to his work, had his thoughts equally busy about Mr. Kneeshaw. "What made that fellow become a priest? He laughs at our Holy Church, her orders, her sacraments, even her creeds. He said to Mawson the other day that the Athanasian Creed was like Temple Bar with the skulls on it—out of date, either as a landmark, a barrier, or a scarecrow, and the sooner it was swept away the better! Good Heavens! This man eats the bread of the Church, and thus bites the hand that feeds him!"

The question that Mr. Gant asked himself, "What brought this Jonah into the ship of the Church?"—"Que diable allait-il faire dans cette galère?"—will perhaps perplex our readers as much as it did Mr. Gant. The truth is, George Kneeshaw drifted into the Church. His father, himself a clergyman, always intended him for the ministry; his mother set her heart upon his entering it, and he himself did not feel himself at first unfit for it. But he soon began to find out his mistake.

To begin with, he had a most uncomfortable curacy. Dr. Clancy, his rector, the Vicar of Wefton, who originally was a missionary, then an usher, then head master of the Hertford Grammar School, and then Vicar of Wefton, treated his curates as fourth-form schoolboys. As a rule, therefore, no one who had any self-respect could endure to serve under him. Nor did he seek such to serve under him. He preferred to justify the wide interval he maintained between himself and his curates by choosing such as were far his inferiors in learning and intellect; and as he was neither an able man nor a profound scholar he had to go low down for his recruits. These recruits were promoted to all the livings in and about Wefton of which the vicar had or obtained the patronage; and so it came about that the clergy of the town and neighbourhood were, as a rule, of a very inferior class. George Kneeshaw, however, though a gentleman and scholar, and the last man the Doctor would have chosen for curate, or who would have chosen the Doctor for rector, had accepted a nomination to the parish church of Wefton on the recommendation of his uncle, a college friend of the vicar. Rector and curate were not long in finding out their mistake, which could not now, however, be rectified for two years, the term of a first curacy. Kneeshaw was the three things Dr. Clancy "most highly held in hate" in a curate—able, independent, and Broad Church; while Dr. Clancy seemed to Kneeshaw, not perhaps altogether justly, the incarnation of cant—a man whose idea of religion was unctuous talk, who believed, so to speak, in "soft money," in an unlimited and irredeemable issue of paper.

Thus, to begin with, Kneeshaw had a very uncomfortable curacy. But this was not all, or nearly all, or anything indeed, compared with another great and growing trouble of his life. Less than a year after his ordination he began to find that he had entered a haunted house, or, rather, a house with a haunted room in it. We cannot better express

his position in the Church. In most respects it was a very pleasant position. It made him master of his own time ; allowed him some leisure to read ; gave him a choice of friends wide as the parish, and brought him into a kindly relationship to the poor that he thought more of and made more of than most clergymen. But this position he held on the terms of his acceptance of creeds, articles, and doctrines that seemed to him to conflict with each other and with reason. At first he stilled his conscience with the thought that, as beyond dispute the Articles looked towards Geneva and the Liturgy towards Rome, no clergyman could accept the two together without reservation. But a slight acquaintance with the clergy of Wefton—who, as we have said, were, as a rule, of a very inferior class—convinced him that they accepted absolute contradictions in perfect good faith, their consciences in this matter being much clearer than their brains. In fact, his intercourse with the Wefton clergy rather deepened than lightened his sense of responsibility, for no reasonable man could listen to their arguments without his faith being shaken. Naturally, though illogically, Kneeshaw's contempt for the advocates extended to contempt for their cause, and his scepticism under their treatment became more confirmed and profound. At first he faced and fought his doubts fiercely.

He would not make his judgment blind ;
He faced the spectres of the mind
To lay them.

But they were not laid. When he seemed to have exorcised them they returned sevenfold and irresistible till he fled before them, and lived now, as we have said, in a house with a haunted room in it, whose door he shunned to open and shuddered even to pass. He declined controversy, put aside apologies and aids to faith, where he found "no light, but rather darkness visible"—which but manifested the difficulties they were designed to clear—and returned to his study of natural history, in which he delighted most and found most distraction. Lock the haunted chamber as he would, however, he could not lock out the horror of it from his mind. It was always there, latent or evident, and affected his whole life, in some respects, curiously enough, for good. Practically, scepticism wrought in him the zeal of a religion. It made him sometimes sour and cynical in speech, especially in his intercourse with his brother clergy, but in act it seemed to double his natural kindness. Naturally he was very generous—to the weak and dependent generosity itself—with women gentle as a woman, with children child-like as a child, humble with the poor, homely with the simple, kindly to every creature with the claim of helplessness. Now this natural kindness was raised by his scepticism into a religion, in part through his eagerness to atone for the heterodoxy of his thoughts by the orthodoxy of his life, and in part through the hope that his life might re-act upon his thoughts to their reconversion—a hope founded on a text in the New Testament and encouraged by the advice of his friend Archer Lawley,

Vicar of Fenton, a Broad Churchman, with whom George spent every spare hour. Those who think that he should not have allowed his conscience to be sophisticated by this hope may have the satisfaction of knowing that the sin brought its own punishment with it. George was haunted and unhappy, flying before a spectre he had not the courage to face again,

Like one that on a lonesome road
Doth walk in fear and dread,
And having once turn'd round, walks on,
And turns no more his head ;
Because he knows a frightful fiend
Doth close behind him tread.

When he had dressed himself with some difficulty—for he was badly bruised and could not stir his right arm without pain—and had got downstairs, he found Fritters in tribulation. A meerschaum pipe had fallen upon a glass case containing a loathsome array of specimens of the British spider which George had collected and arranged ; and Fritters, stooping over the wreck, was divided between her horror of the spiders and her desire to pick the pipe and the shattered glass out from among them.

"Oh, please, sir, I done it," she cried, with a fresh outburst of tears. "I was standing on a chair a-polishing of the bookcase, when I shook down the pipe from the top on to the glass case. Eh, whatever maun I do?"

"Pooh!" said George, taking up the pipe to find a hairy and hideous specimen crushed out of all recognition under its bowl. "Don't be a child, Fritters"—Fritters was of the mature age of twelve—"there isn't much harm done, and crying won't mend it, anyhow." He was under the fond delusion that Fritters was bemoaning his loss and deprecating his anger, though nothing could be farther from her thoughts.

"Eh! but shoo will go on though," said Fritters, not in the least consoled. "Ye mind how shoo called me for a week for blackleading of your boots, sir, and that was nowt to this," looking disconsolately at the shattered case.

George couldn't help a smile at his egotistical delusion that Fritters' concern was about him, while at the same time he was pleased by her faith in his forgiveness. "She'll think it was I, Fritters," said he, putting his hand kindly on the girl's shoulder.

"But, please, sir, if shoo ax you if I done it?" asked Fritters anxiously, knowing George was a soft one and fearing he might not have the strength of mind to tell a direct lie.

"She can't ask me if I say, 'Miss Skinner, I have had a misfortune; would you kindly send Fritters for the glazier?'"

Fritters was as much tickled as relieved by the idea of doing Miss Skinner in this ingenious way; and her crushing terror of that virago having been removed there was room in her heart for lighter anxieties

to stir. "Please, sir, was it a *particler un*?" she asked, looking at the scrunched spider with an expression in which natural abhorrence and an affectation of interest struggled together ludicrously.

"It was a specimen of the *Argyroneta aquatica*, Fritters," said George solemnly.

"Was it though?" exclaimed Fritters, looking now with awe on the brute. "And the glass will be *ténpence* mayhap?" Here she felt on surer ground, for *ténpence* was deducted from her scanty last quarter's wages for a pane she put her elbow through. Suddenly, to George's surprise, she began to cry more silently, but more profusely than ever. "I'm nowt but trouble to you, sir," she sobbed, "but I *will* learn them tables."

This heroic resolution referred to tasks Mr. Kneeshaw set her. He gave Fritters the only thing he ever grudged to give—his time—borrowing her from Miss Skinner for half an hour of an evening to teach her to read, write, and cipher. The girl was a foundling from the workhouse, recommended to George by her friendlessness, and as she took the opportunity of her evening lesson to tell him her griefs and grievances, she soon learned to look on him as her *Deus ex machina* to get her out of scrapes. She felt besides that there was a bond between them in their common awe of Miss Skinner, who ruled George nearly as despotically as she did Fritters.

"Of course you'll learn the tables," said George soothingly, touched by the feeling she showed; "but I'll tell you what, Fritters, if Miss Skinner sees you've been crying, she'll know you've been in mischief." This was effective, especially as it was reinforced by a shrill cry from the kitchen.

"Georgina!"—the workhouse mistress, who was childless, had christened the foundling after her husband—"Georgina! What-are-you-a-doing-of-upstairs-and-not-a-hand-put-to-the-boots-and-knives-when-it-is-a'most-time-to-be-getting-dinner-ready-you-lazy-idle-gaumless-good-for-nowt!" This discharge of shrapnell, shot out as one word, was very effective, and brought down Fritters instantaneously. George also felt, as it was meant he should, the reproach of lateness and laziness, and sat down to devour his breakfast and the *Weston Witness* simultaneously, after the manner of bachelors. He soon came across a paragraph of some interest, which he read with a grim smile.

"Our readers will be concerned to hear of an accident, which was like to have had a fatal termination, and which happened last evening to Mr. Clarence Pickles, son of our respected member. As Mr. Pickles was driving down Sugg Lane—which it will be remembered is the short way from Driffield Street to the Lancashire and Yorkshire Station—a little urchin ran out of one of the houses in that swarming neighbourhood waving a red flag in the face of the horse. The high-spirited animal took fright, became uncontrollable, and bolted, and, having knocked down and run over the child which was the cause of all the mischief, dashed

from Sugg Lane into Slater's Alley—the footway which crosses the railway cutting by the plank bridge. Here the groom lost his nerve and leaped off, but Mr. Pickles fortunately stuck manfully to his post, though he could not guide the panic-stricken animal so as to prevent its knocking down the Rev. Mr. Kneeshaw, one of the curates of the parish church, who, however, we are happy to say, escaped without serious injury. As the shaft struck the reverend gentleman, the horse stumbled and came down within a few yards of the cutting, into which, in all human probability, it must have plunged but for this timely and most providential accident. The horse, which was a very valuable animal, was seriously injured, and the harness, either maliciously, or, as we prefer to think, officiously, was cut to pieces by the crowd that collected about the scene of the accident. The groom had two ribs broken in his fall, and the child, which was run over and had both its legs fractured, lies in a precarious state, its mother obstinately opposing its removal to the Infirmary."

In this piece of penny-a-lining, George read the frank hand of Mr. Pickles; and indeed the reporter, hearing of the accident, had judiciously gone to head-quarters to ensure the correctness of his account. Mr. Pickles would probably have given a truer, or at least a more plausible, narrative of the affair if the reporter had not come upon him while still in a state of irritation against Mr. Kneeshaw and not cool enough to calculate the evidence against such a version of the accident. George was not the man to talk or think much of his part in the affair, and was more amused than aggrieved by the paragraph, so far as it concerned himself; that part of it, however, in which the reporter, echoing Mr. Pickles, showed less concern for the injured child than for the injured horse and harness, was not amusing. George had seen the little fellow immediately after the accident, and could not get the white face, patient from excess of pain, out of his thoughts as he lay awake in the night; and now he hurried over his breakfast that he might go to see what could be done for the child.

Sugg Lane, with its two gorgeous gin palaces, many foul and fetid beershops, and its sordid, squalid, crowded homes, was like one of those women who might be seen of a morning standing about its pavement—frowsy, slatternly, down-at-heel, and unwholesome-looking, a tawdry ribbon or two making her rags look more wretched. In a sunken cellar in this unlvely lane lay the little child that was run over—Squire Lumb. "Squire," "Colonel," "Captain," and even "Lord," are not uncommon Christian names in the levelling West Riding. The little Squire lay lost in a corner of a great bed which took up a third of the cellar, and which he shared at night with his father and mother. His mother had left the wash-tub to coax him into lying quiet, for he was very restless and feverish.

"Lig thee daan, doy, doee nah." *

* Lie down, dear, do now.

"May I come in, Mrs. Lumb?"

"Come forards, Mr. Kneeshaw, and sit thee daan. Aw'm fain to see yo."

"How is he to-day?"

"None so weel," said the poor woman, as she rocked herself back and forward in deep trouble. "He had some mak' of a sick gird*—a fit like—after yo'd been last neet, and doctor coomed and 'xamined him and said we must tak' him to t' Infirmary. Eh, my puir bairn, my puir bairn, they'll niver tak' thee to t' Infirmary to be a-cuttin' and a-slashin' and tryin' their experience wi' thee; for tha knaws, Mr. Kneeshaw, when Joe Webster, our Nancy's husband's brother, fell off the stee† and was took to t' Infirmary, the doctors tell'd him there was nowt for it but he maun have his leg ta'en off, and he nobbut a lad, as it might be our James, and as fine a lad as ever stepped, but they killed him amang 'em did t' doctors, and cut his leg off, and he niver looked up at after,‡ but was browt hoam to dee. And then to be telled that aw'm a-murderin' our Squire because aw'm agen his gwin' into t' Infirmary! An' murdered he is, too," cried the poor mother, starting up and bending over the bed, "trampled and trodden down like t' stones in t' street, and thowt no more on than t' muck under t' horses' hoofs. Eh, that ever I should live to see this day!"

George said what he could to soothe her, which wasn't much, and then, knowing that hard work is the anodyne of the poor, tried to divert her thoughts. "I see you have a big wash to-day, Mrs. Lumb, and I am sure you won't mind me if I sit and watch Squire a bit, while you go on with your washing. I have a bit of time to myself this morning."

"It's varry gooid on yo', Mr. Kneeshaw, aw'm sewer it is, and aw'll niver be out on your debt," said Mrs. Lumb, drying her tears in her apron. "When he was a-ramblin' and a-ravin' last neet, and that restless that we were fair bet wi' him, 'twas 'Mr. Kneeshaw' an' 'Mr. Kneeshaw' ovver an' ovver agin."

Squire was still and lucid enough now, watching with a dreamy interest the grapes and the flaring picture-book which George added to the treasures ranged by his bed. These treasures, which he had asked at different times to have brought to him, were only a less pitiful sight than the child himself—a white marble, a string with a round piece of leather at the end, a whipping top, twopence in halfpence, and the burst balloon, which was found clutched in his hand when he was picked up. He nodded towards it now, as George sat by the bedside and took the little feverish hand in his: "Broken!" he said, looking up anxiously in George's face to see how he would take this terrible disaster. He seemed quite relieved when George only smiled and said—

"Never mind, Squire, we can get another."

He lay quiet a little to take in this offer in all its bearings, looking the

* "Gird," attack.

† "Stee," ladder.

‡ "Looked up at after," i. e. got over it.

while at the burst balloon, his mind wandering from it to the accident, of which it was the occasion, with the result of a refusal which was not meant to be as ungracious as it sounded—"Don't want another;" and then, after a pause, "Please, Mr. Kneeshaw, I shall miss my marks."

"Eh, mun! he does greet over thim marks," said his mother, whose broad Yorkshire contrasted with the child's school-taught English. Marks for attendance were given in the Sunday-school, and a prize at the close of the year for the full number. It was curious to find the treasures of a top and marble and the troubles of the loss of a mark and a sixpenny prize of such importance as to be remembered by the child in the midst of his pain; and George in his present depressed mood drew the morbid moral that the treasures and troubles of the lad's elders would not look larger if taken from under the microscope of their imagination. From this morbid moralising he was roused by the appearance of a special treasure and trouble of his own. He was startled into dropping a grape he was peeling with his penknife for the child by a voice at the door.

"Does Mrs. Lumb live here?"

Mrs. Lumb herself was startled into the astonishing civility of a curtsy.

"Nay for sewer, Miss Masters! Ould Betty sent for yo' after all? I telled her aw couldn't for shame ax yo' to come into t' lane, let alone such a hoil as this."

"I wasn't sent for, Mrs. Lumb, but I read of the accident in the paper and thought I might help you to nurse a bit. How do you do, Mr. Kneeshaw? You're not hurt, I hope?"

"Thank you, I'm all right," said George, who couldn't help a look of amazement at Miss Masters' appearance in the last character in which he would have expected to see her. Her ministrations had been confined to her own neighbourhood, which was in another parish at the far side of the town. "I didn't know you knew Squire, Miss Masters."

"I don't know him. Do I, Squire?" she said, as she rearranged his tumbled pillows with one hand and with the other raised his head with the deftness of a nurse and the tenderness of a mother. Squire's wide wondering eyes were a sufficient answer.

"I thought Mrs. Lumb wished to send for you."

"Nooan soa, Mr. Kneeshaw, aw niver thowt on axin' her into sich an a haase as this. But ould Betty—tha knaws ould Betty, Miss, shoo that hawks brandysnap an' sich mak' o' stuff—shoo telled me that tha visited the sick childer araand where shoo come thro', up aboon the Green Market, and that tha did 'em a deal more gooid nor t' doctors."

The Prince could not have been more amazed at the sight of Cinderella at home than George at this revelation of Miss Masters as hospital nurse.

"Yes; I do sometimes visit sick children," said the young lady defiantly, in answer to the astonished look which had not yet died out of

George's face. "There's room in Wefton, I hope, for another Miss Langham."

Miss Langham was an odious old maid, attached to the parish church as tract and scandal distributor, the horror of its curates, the terror of its poor, and George's special detestation, as Miss Masters well knew.

"I thought you were close behind me, Jane," to her maid, who now appeared at the door wrestling with a big bundle.

"Please, Miss, I lost you at the turn."

"It's a water-bed for Squire, Mrs. Lumb. He will find it much easier to lie on."

"I'm afraid I can be of no use," said George wistfully.

"Unless you can make beds, Mr. Kneeshaw. But even Miss Langham wouldn't turn you out of a house in your own parish."

"You don't know Miss Langham then. I shall call again in the evening to hear what the doctor thinks, Mrs. Lumb, and to bring Squire the Sunday-school prize he is fretting over. Good-bye, Miss Masters; I shall report you to Miss Langham for poaching."

As George walked away he thought that the less he saw of that young lady the better it would be for his peace of mind, and for his peace of conscience, too. He must not give another hostage to the Church that held already so many securities for his fealty.





"READ THAT LAST PARAGRAPH OVER AGAIN."

THE
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Love the Debt.

CHAPTER IV.
MABEL—CHILDHOOD.



N unknown cause of the known effects which we call phenomena, likenesses and differences among these known effects, and a segregation of the effects into subject and object—these are the postulates without which we cannot think. Within each of the segregated masses of manifestations there are likenesses and differences involving secondary segregations, which have also become indispensable postulates. The vivid manifestations

constituting the non-ego do not simply cohere, but their cohesions have certain invariable modes; and among the faint manifestations constituting the ego, which are products of the vivid, there exist corresponding modes of cohesion——”

"I wish, Mabel, you'd put some expression into what you read," said Colonel Masters petulantly.

"But I can't understand it, father; you might as well expect expression from a barrel-organ."

"Oh, if you take it in that way, and speak of reading for your father as organ-grinding, you had better close the book."

"I meant to compare myself to the organ, not the grinder, father, repeating mechanically the tunes put into me. I read the whole chapter over last night, to try to understand it, that I might read it intelligently to you this morning; but it was no use," said Mabel wearily, "I couldn't make it out."

Her father's sole reply was a shrug, expressive at once of his contempt for woman's intellect, and his martyr-like resignation to the fate that gave him such a daughter.

"May I finish the chapter, father? There are only two or three more sentences."

"Yes, you may as well finish it now," said Mr. Masters, in an injured tone. "Read that last paragraph over again."

Colonel Masters had quite as good sight as his daughter, but some years before a doctor had told him that nothing tried the sight so much as reading; and from that day he resolved to save his own eyes at the expense of his daughter's. He had never thought of any one but himself since he began to think at all, and a soldier's life does not tend by any means to make a man unselfish. If he had married young or for love, he might have been drawn out of himself more; but he was a confirmed misogynist, and married at thirty-five, in despair of the dreariness of an Indian life, and in the hope of having a son, whom he might train up in certain principles he had thought out for himself, and was anxious to see tested. His marriage, however, disappointed all his expectations, and rather deepened than lightened the gloom of his disposition and of his life. His wife had not much spirit to begin with, or she would not have married him at the bidding of her parents, and when the little she had was broken a year after her marriage, her meekness, which was meant to conciliate, exasperated him by its insipidity more than any display of spirit would have done.

To him

She was all fault who had no fault at all;
For who loved him must have a touch of earth;
The low sun makes the colour.

And when, after much expectation, she was confined at last only of a daughter, he lost all hope of her ever being reasonable, and treated her henceforth with less consideration than he showed his Syce. The poor woman would have died of the horrible loneliness of his companionship but for the arrival of Mabel. Her she hid away from her father, as some animals of her sex hide their young from their mates lest they should devour them, and lavished upon her in secret all the pent-up

love of her heart. Pet and seclude her as she would, however, it was impossible to keep the child from screaming occasionally, or always to keep these excruciating screams out of the hearing of her father. Now he had a horror that was absolutely morbid of noises of all kinds. Their effect on his exquisitely strung nerves was such as the whole household, and indeed the whole community, had reason to dread. A good healthy scream of Mabel's in the morning so upset him that he was sure to beat his Syce, abuse his subordinates, make himself intolerable to his equals, and to sting and stab his wretched wife with savage sarcasms. In fact, a scream of Mabel's in those days created a sensation like that caused by the appalling scream in *Parisina*.

Through the open lattice driven,
That horrid voice ascends to heaven;
And those who heard it as it past,
In mercy wished it were the last.

It was no sooner heard than the men-servants scuttled out of the house, and the women-servants made for the nursery, with all kinds of charms for the soothing of the child. While one danced it up and down, another dangled her bracelet in its eyes, a third put a spoonful of some seductive syrup into its too, too wide-open mouth, while a fourth made as fast and air-tight as she could all the doors and windows—its bewildered mother looking on the while in helpless trouble. Nor, if Mabel appeared in all her beauty at that station now, could she have been more talked of than she was in those days. Masters was not popular, and his paroxysm of rage upon the birth of his daughter, and its recurrence at every scream that recalled her existence to him, was at first a joke and at last a grievance to Messrs. Barclay, Pearce, and Sagar, who had often to depend upon him to make up their whist party of an evening; and thus it happened that Mabel owed to an idle jest of one of these gentlemen the shaping of her character and of her early years. They came to think the child's tempers, which were neither frequent nor violent, the final cause of all Masters' tempers, which were both frequent and violent, so that the facetious Sagar had furbished up an old joke, and christened Mabel "the cherub," because she "continually did cry."

"I say," said Barclay to that gentleman one night, "I can't stand that fellow Masters any longer."

"You mean you can't stand losing, old boy," said Sagar, who, having won considerably, was much more patient of human infirmity. "But Masters is a beast, and no mistake."

Barclay, after pulling at his pipe gloomily for some moments, recurred to his grievance: "What's that they give 'em to keep 'em in good temper in baby farms?"

"The bottle, my boy; try it, it's very soothing," said his facetious chum, pushing the brandy bottle towards him. "Soothing syrup, that's it; why the deuce doesn't Pearce"—Pearce was the doctor—"give it soothing syrup?"

"What! murder a patient?—kill the goose with the golden eggs?"

"Needn't kill it," growled the morose Barclay, "stun it a bit; or, by Jove, order it home; they do order them home, you know."

"Yes, before they're weaned; put 'em in a hamper labelled 'To be kept dry,' in charge of the captain," said Sagar, with provoking flippancy, jingling his winnings cheerfully; and then, after a pause, with a sudden change to seriousness, "By George, though, it will do!"

"Of course it will do; send it home with an ayah," said Barclay, triumphantly.

"Send it home with its mother," said Sagar; "that brute is killing her."

"What! are you going to get sick leave?" sneered his chum.

Barclay was too swinish not to misinterpret Sagar's feeling towards Mrs. Masters, which was made up of a chivalrous mixture of admiration of her beauty, reverence for her meek goodness, and pity for her fate.

"She could go home with the Sedgwicks," said Sagar, too much engrossed with his scheme for rescuing her from Bluebeard to heed Barclay's sneer. "I wonder has Pearce turned in yet. I'll cross over and see;" and before Barclay could muster up any more clumsy chaff, the kind-hearted and impulsive lad was across to the Doctor's. The Doctor, who hadn't turned in, naturally expected an important patient when Sagar burst in upon him impetuously.

"Don't be uneasy, Doctor; nobody's ill," said Sagar jocosely.

The Doctor tried to look relieved, but listened rather sourly to Sagar's scheme. He didn't like the loss of so good a patient as Mrs. Masters, and he didn't like the light use which Sagar proposed to make of his professional advice; but, on the other hand, as he also admired and pitied Mrs. Masters, he suffered for his devotion to her an hourly martyrdom from the tongue of his jealous shrew of a wife. While affecting to listen to all Sagar's sentimental and irrelevant pleas, he was weighing the practical *pros* and *cons* in his own mind, and at last decided that he had all along intended to order Mrs. Masters herself to England, that he had spoken about the change to her several times, and even hinted its advisability to her husband, and that he would put the matter to-morrow, once for all, plainly before them. At the same time he made it quite clear that the idea was wholly his own, and that it was suggested by the delicacy of the lady's health, and not of her relations with her husband. This Mr. Sagar was not concerned to dispute, but was rather glad to confirm, knowing enough of human nature to be sure that the Doctor would be more zealous in the advocacy of a scheme of his own than of one suggested by another. It did not need zealous advocacy, however. Captain Masters was only too glad to be rid of his wife and daughter. Mrs. Masters felt, and was shocked to feel, a timid and secret joy at the prospect of escaping from such a husband, and of carrying her little one to a safer nest; and the only one distressed by the scheme was its originator.

Poor Sagar had come to regard this sweet, gracious, and unhappy woman with something of the chivalrous devotion which an enthusiastic loyalist would feel towards his imprisoned and oppressed queen ; and her departure was as great a grief to him as it was a relief to her husband. It had, however, the effect of clearing Mabel's character, for Masters' tempers were soon found to be spontaneously generated, and not merely born of the tempers of his daughter ; and the morose Barclay was fain to admit that only the devil could be the father of such outbursts as he once put down to the credit of the baby.

In this way it came about that Mabel's early and impressionable years passed from under the blighting shadow of her father's tyranny. Her first impressions, which, like a palimpsest, were written over without being erased, were all of her mother ; that is, of gentleness, guilelessness, unselfishness, simple piety, and profound love. When she was six years old, indeed, her father spent with her mother and her a fortnight of his two years' leave—the rest being given to foreign travel ; but her only impressions of him were, that he was childish yet hated children, and noisy and yet hated noise ; to which paradoxical conclusions she was brought in this wise : while he was in the house she was taught to sit still as a stone, and yet when he talked to her, he spoke in a great and terrible voice. In truth, he shouted to her as some people shout to foreigners, through confounding dulness of intelligence with dulness of hearing. When he would roar nearly at the top of his voice, " Well, Mabel, how do you like your doll ? " the little girl, perplexed by a kind question put so terrifically, could only look up half amazed and half frightened, and would thus confirm his impression that she was, like her mother, an idiot.

By the way, it was curious to see how, after this tremendous question, she hid her doll away from him, as by a derived instinct, just as her mother had hidden her in her infancy away from him.

Nor was Mabel's opinion of her father's intellect in those days more flattering than that he had formed of hers. As, in order to make himself intelligible to her, he spoke not only in a loud voice, but as nearly as he could in monosyllables, or in dissyllables distinctly divided (as in a primer), she had an idea that he, like her ayah, and very probably all other Indian persons, was only at the stage of education which she had left behind two years ago. So that she in turn—when she ventured to speak at all—tried to speak down to the level of his understanding. Living alone with her mother, she had come to think in old-fashioned words and ways ; but these she tried so to translate that they should be intelligible to the undeveloped intellect of her father. This mutual misunderstanding made a conversation between them rather amusing. Of course, if either had heard the other speak to a third person, each might have formed a worthier impression of the other's understanding. As, however, they met only at lunch-time—Mabel's dinner-hour—and as Major Masters made a point of devoting himself exclusively to her for the few minutes they were together—in order to draw out the little

intellect she had—there was no such opportunity of correcting their estimates of each other. Major Masters would shout “Mabel, do you know any stories?”

Mabel, though by this time she had got used to the loudness of his voice, would hesitate about her answer. She imagined that her father, like her ayah, wished to have retailed to him the stories she read or heard from her mother, and she could not at once make her mind up as to what story would suit him best.

“Tales, you know,” said her father in a still louder tone, thinking that “tales,” being monosyllabic, would be more intelligible than the dissyllabic “stories.” “Tales, you know, like *Who killed Cock Robin?* or *Babes in the Wood.*”

“Oh, dear!” thought Mabel, “is he so far back as that?” and then she went back to the earliest stratum of stories in her memory. “I know the story of *Joseph*, and of *Jack the Giant Killer*, and *Sindbad the Sailor*, and the *Three Bears*, and Elisha’s bears; he was bald and hated children,” she explained, thinking that story might interest him most, as in both respects he resembled the prophet. “And *Little Red Riding Hood*, and Moses in the bulrushes, and the *Babes in the Wood*; but you know that?” she corrected herself, looking up into his face interrogatively.

“She’s certainly silly,” thought Major Masters, who was not perhaps singular in considering no one wise who did not think him wise.

“Or,” continued Mabel, after a pause which her father didn’t fill—she was a terrible chatterbox once her tongue was loosed—“or I could tell you *The Eleven Wild Swans*, but you mightn’t underst—care for that,” she substituted, thinking “understand” both too long and too uncomplimentary a word for her father. He, meanwhile, had forgotten her existence, as he often did that of any one who was speaking to him, and had gone off in a reverie about the son that should have been born to him, and the education he would have given him.

The Major was sitting back in his chair, after his lunch, pulling his long grizzled moustache and staring steadfastly at her without seeing her. “How old are you?” he said abruptly, when he had brought his scattered thoughts back to a focus. Mabel flattered herself that both the question and the long stare that preceded it meant amazement at her acquirements.

“Oh, I know ever so much more than that,” she exclaimed, forgetting to answer the question in her eagerness to increase the admiration from which she thought it sprang. “I know——”

“How much are 8 times 6?” interrupted her father.

This was a terrible blow. Mabel was as much below her years in arithmetic as she was above them in most things. She flushed all over with the shame and mortification of the reaction from pride to abasement, and began to climb slowly in her mind the steep steps from 8 times 2 are 16 upwards. She had just reached 8 times 6 are 48 when her father impatiently changed the problem.

“How much are 6 times 8?”

She would have said at once 48, if in her confusion it did not seem that as 6 times a thing *must* be less than 8 times a thing, 48 could not be right for both. She puzzled over this till she got so bewildered that the only distinct idea in her mind was a crushing sense of disgrace, which brought the tears into her eyes. Her father no sooner saw this alarming sign, which seemed the storm signal of such screams as used to follow it in her infancy, than he turned to say sharply to her mother, "Take her away." And so poor Mabel was led away, sobbing bitterly, to be petted and purred over and consoled by her idolising mother.

In this way Major Masters came to form a mean idea of Mabel's intellect from the first, and his prejudiced impression of it was rather confirmed than weakened by the little intercourse he allowed between them in after years. For, as he cared only for—to use De Quincey's distinction—the literature of knowledge, and she only for the literature of power, he knew little and thought less of her acquirements. No doubt he sometimes made her read to him such books as she delighted in and he despised; for whatever his favourite Review recommended, he thought it right to read, to keep abreast with the age; but her admirable rendering of them was lost upon his listlessness, and never suggested that she could be interested in anything uninteresting to him. On the other hand, Mabel had an extravagant veneration for her father's learning and intelligence. If he despised what interested her in literature, it was, she thought, because he had left such things long since behind, and they looked little from the height he had reached. "She darkly felt him great and wise," and shared his opinion not only of himself, but of her. She was told daily for years of her stupidity, and was forced to realise it in reading the dreary and maddening metaphysics in which he rejoiced, so that the conceit of her childhood had given place to despairing diffidence of her own powers, so long as, like Miranda, she knew no one but her father. When, however, like Miranda, she came to know a "brave new world," she learned to think more truly of herself, though not of her father. Compared with him, she felt herself still what he thought her—dull and ignorant; but she found she could hold her own very fairly in the society of Weston. She had, in fact, an advantage over the young ladies of that society—she had not had a first-class education. She had not given the most profitable years of her life to acquiring stucco accomplishments that were meant, like female ants' wings, to bear their possessors to a settlement, and then to be nipped off and discarded. Till she was ten years old, her only teacher was her mother, who, though she felt painfully her incompetence to develop the child's precocious powers, could not bear to resign her labour of love to a governess. At ten she lost her mother, who, in nursing her night and day through an attack of scarlatina, herself caught the fever and was too worn out with watching to resist it. Her mother's death nearly coincided with the return of her father from abroad to find himself a widower in charge of a child so stupefied with her bereavement as to

seem to him more silly even than he expected. Her mother had been father, mother, sister, brother, teacher, everything to Mabel, and she was so much older than her years as to realise her loss intensely and at every turn. She flitted about the house like a shadow, spoke only when spoken to, and then only in monosyllables, and pored over the Bible constantly as over a book of travels that would give her an idea of the kind of place to which her mother had gone. All these signs, and the last not least of all, confirmed her father's first impression that she was sillier even than the average of her sex. What was to be done with her? To send girls to school seemed to him like "sending men ruffles when wanting a shirt." Women had no minds, and the fringe and frippery of ornamental knowledge they picked up, parrotwise, at school, was a mere sham to conceal their mental nakedness. Still, if she stayed at home, there must be somebody to take care of her, and keep her out of his way. While meditating these things, he received a letter from an aged aunt, the terror of his boyhood and the parasite of his later years, who periodically extorted contributions from him under the threat of disgracing the noble name of Masters by going out as a governess. This demand and threat were renewed in this letter, and decided him to silence a dun and secure a cheap governess by inviting the old lady to take charge of Mabel's education. There was but one objection to the arrangement—the old lady was distressingly deaf; and though he certainly wasn't going to take the trouble to talk to her himself, still Mabel's shrieking her lessons to her would be insupportable. Why not establish a gynecium—set apart one wing of the house to the exclusive use of Mabel and Miss Murdoch, with double doors, densely padded, dividing it from the body of the building? Miss Murdoch having accepted the charge subject to this admirable arrangement, Mabel passed from the care of her mother to the rule of this spinster. Age had a good deal softened the sternness which had kept Colonel Masters' boyhood in awe, but still Miss Murdoch was a formidable personage, bony both in body and in mind, with, however, this singular qualification for the post of governess—there was one subject she professed to teach which she really and thoroughly knew herself. Having had in her youth an excellent English education, of which she had the taste and talent to make the most, she knew and appreciated the best books of the best ages of our literature, and these she put Mabel steadily through, finding her an apter pupil even than she had been herself. But having, unfortunately, in her old age, and in view of becoming a governess, taken a fancy to master the French tongue, she was under the impression that this acquisition was worth most because it cost most. She was especially proud of her Parisian accent, picked up not in Stratford-atte-Bowe, but from a flattering French friend. She considered no lady educated whose French pronunciation was not pure, and the shibboleth of purity she held to be the pronunciation of the vowel U. If any one will shout some subtle sound into an ear-trumpet at the top of his voice, he will find a slight difficulty in

preserving the niceties of a pure pronunciation. It is not to be wondered at, then, if Mabel, the martyr not of a diphthong, but of a vowel, underwent a good deal of persecution from failing to satisfy Miss Murdoch's nice ear on this point. There was hardly a day in which she had not to shriek many times over a sound not unlike the cry of the peewit; yet when Miss Murdoch lay on her deathbed five years after Mabel came under her charge, she felt it a weight on her conscience that the child had not yet achieved a Parisian pronunciation. Lying on her deathbed, indeed, does not rightly describe the close of this grim, indomitable woman's life. She sat and taught in her chair almost to the last, seeming to hold with Vespasian that "a ruler should die standing;" and the Rev. Joseph Meekins was amazed to hear Mabel shouting "Eheu!" through the ear-trumpet the very day before Miss Murdoch's death. He could interpret it only as a heathen and heartless form of lamentation, and was not more edified by Miss Murdoch's response to it. "Child, child, it's too late now," she cried, with a hopeless shake of the head. "All these years have been wasted!"

CHAPTER V.

MABEL—GIRLHOOD.

MABEL, while in Miss Murdoch's charge, saw little of her father. At first he allowed them to take their meals with him; but as Mabel, from living so much with Miss Murdoch, shouted to every one as she was used to shout to her, Colonel Masters soon found her society insupportable. Upon her shrieking in a piercing treble, "If you please," to him one day at dinner, he turned to the waitress with this laconic sentence of exile, "Miss Murdoch and Miss Mabel will have their meals in their own apartments in future." Mabel henceforth saw her father only

In visits

Like those of angels, short and far between.

Once, indeed, it occurred to him that she might be of some use to science and himself. He might mentally vivisect her, find out by cross-examination when and how the ideas of personal identity, self-consciousness, God, etc., first arose in her mind. She was so young she could not have had them long, and could not have forgotten how she came by them.

Mabel was sent for. Her father sat at his desk in his study with a carefully prepared list of questions in one hand, and in the other a pen for jotting down the answers. Mabel stood before him trembling. He asked her the most amazing questions, of which one only was intelligible to the child, and it gave her the idea that he was anxious about her progress in religious knowledge. This unlucky prepossession of hers did not make her answers to the other questions more apt or

acceptable. Her father despaired of and despised her intellect more than ever. He had reduced the questions to the lowest terms of simplicity at the cost of much thought, and these idiotic answers were the result!

On another occasion he tried again to put her to scientific use. He was reading Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*, and wished to verify the expressions of suffering illustrated by the photographs of weeping children which adorn that philosophic work. Accordingly—having given up reluctantly the idea of making Mabel cry, which Miss Murdoch, with some warmth, revolted against—he instructed her and the servants to give him instantaneous notice of any outburst of tears of the child's. He seemed to think her still of an age to cry in the hearty wide-mouthed way he saw in the photographs, and remembered in India. Mabel, it is true, cried a good deal at this time, but always quietly and in secret; and it was so long before she was surprised in the act that her father grew petulant and impatient, and took Miss Murdoch more than once to task for her remissness. When at last, however, the housemaid came flying to him with the welcome news that "Miss Mabel was a-crying of her eyes out, sitting on a box in the hattie," and he had hurried up the steep steps to the attic with Darwin's book in his hand, open at the illustrations, he found to his disgust the wretched child weeping in silence with unconvulsed features over a few relics of her mother. He was gone again in wrath before Mabel had recovered from her astonishment at seeing him in a place which had hitherto been a safe refuge for her and the rats. She accounted to herself for his sudden appearance and disappearance by supposing that he came to seek something and fled before the sight of her in the fear of her shouting to him. She felt she must have been trespassing, that the attic was in his quarter of the house, and that it was forbidden ground to her henceforth. Now there was not a day hitherto on which the lonely child did not climb up into the attic and brood over her treasures and the memories of her mother they called up. The ghost stories her old nurse used to tell, a terror to her then, were a solace to her now. She would creep up in the evening to the dark attic in the hope that she might see her mother, and in the faith that, visible or not, she was near her; and Mr. Meekins would have been horrified to hear her in her prayers address her mother as a devout Catholic addresses his patron saint. In this way the attic became sacred to her as an oratory and retreat; and to quit it for ever, as she felt forced to do now, was rather a wrench to her. She had no need to quit it, however, for her father never sought her again, either in the attic or elsewhere, till after Miss Murdoch's death, when the doctor, called in for a bilious attack, incidentally advised him that nothing tried the sight more than reading. Hereupon it occurred to him for the third time that Mabel might be of use in the world. He sent for her and set her to read a chapter of Buckle's *Civilisation*. She read admirably—reading for the deaf is a good school at least for distinct articulation—and her father

was so satisfied that he bade her be in the study every morning at half-past six ; for an Indian habit of early rising still clung to him.

Thus Mabel at fifteen was introduced to books that were not the most suitable or edifying to her age and sex. But she read as most of us read—assimilating what attracted her, rejecting what repelled her, distilling “some soul of goodness from things evil,” and “gathering honey from the weed.” It was Una among the Satyrs subduing them to innocent service. She read daily to her father for an hour and a half before breakfast and an hour and a half after, and was allowed to do what she would with the rest of the day. Some of it she gave to music, in which she was but moderately skilled, but of which she was passionately fond ; and much of it to her own favourite books. In this way she might have grown silent, eccentric, and unsociable, if it was not for the Rev. Joseph Meekins. Mabel went regularly to church ; for, though her father was an atheist, and would have thought it worth while to bring up a son in his principles, he held that women had not soul enough to receive them, and that they took to church in their womanhood as naturally and despicably as they took to dolls in their childhood. So Mabel went without interference to church regularly and gladly. It was the one day in the week in which she could get near her mother's grave—for the churchyard gates were locked on weekdays ; and her mother still was the only friend and companion she had known. It was the one day in the week, too, in which she saw the world—admirably represented in all its elements in church. And, lastly, and notwithstanding the ineffable dreariness of Mr. Meekins' discourses, she liked church for its own sake. In her early years she had gone with her mother to the Baptist Chapel ; but when, among other street improvements, it was swept away and replaced by a gin-palace, and there was not enough money or members to establish another, her mother had taken her to church, and eventually allowed her even to be baptized. In this way Mabel came by her creed as creditably as most of us, and was as reasonably proud of her Church as the hero of “H.M.S. Pinafore” was of his country :—

For he himself has said it,
And it's greatly to his credit,
That he's an Englishman.

But she was no more proud, and had no more reason to be proud, of her Church principles than was the Rev. Joseph Meekins. This worthy man took to himself the credit of having snatched her as a brand from the burning. He had grave and great doubts of her father's orthodoxy, not merely because he didn't attend church—a neglect he considered Indian—but because he didn't seem to have sound views on the subject of infant baptism. Colonel Masters' views on that question were not, perhaps, altogether sound ; but he was not even conscious of having given Mr. Meekins any reason to think so. He would no more stoop to argue with a clergyman than he would stoop to blow down a child's house of

cards ; and, indeed, in the company of a clergyman he usually gave way altogether to the habit he had contracted from living so much alone of answering at random, without listening to a word that was said. When, then, Mr. Meekins, speaking to him of the virtual heathenism of the Baptist children, and of Mabel's providential escape from that heresy, and of her baptism by his predecessor, Mr. Bray, said that, "terrible as it was to him to think of the number of children who were unbaptized in this Christian country from mere neglect, it was still more terrible to think of the number who were left purposely and on principle unbaptized"—Colonel Masters, pulling his moustache slowly, gazing steadily into the fire, and composing a sentence of his forthcoming pamphlet upon "The Cæcum in Man," had yet room enough in his mind for a hazy idea that Mr. Meekins was complaining of the numbers left to him to baptize by the neglect of his predecessor.

"Bray didn't like their squalling, I suppose," he said absently. "Why don't you wait to christen them till they are grown up, eh?"

"My dear sir!" cried Mr. Meekins in horror.

He knew that Colonel Masters held strange and strong opinions upon such unimportant matters as spontaneous generation and the ascidian origin of man ; but he never dreamed that he had advanced so far as to question the necessity of infant baptism. Yet, damnable as the heresy seemed, he was, perhaps, as much pleased as shocked at finding Colonel Masters inclined to it. He had read up this very subject lately for the confutation of the Baptists, who swarmed in his parish ; and here was a providential opportunity of proving his armour. Accordingly, he entered into a long argument to prove the apostolic origin of infant baptism, laying special stress on the fact that whole families, and therefore little babies, were then baptized together. Meanwhile, Colonel Masters, deep in his demonstration of man's being as the beasts that perish in having a cæcum and not having a soul, did not look as convinced by Mr. Meekins' arguments as that gentleman had a right to expect. In fact the Colonel had taken in only a word here and there of the whole discourse ; though, when roused by the silence at its close, he said in a tone of the deepest conviction—

"Quite so, Mr. Meekins, quite so. I should baptize them in batches—whole families together, as you say—except, of course, the infants. The noise is terrible."

Henceforth Mr. Meekins' opinion of Colonel Masters was not only that of a man who did not believe in infant baptism, which was bad, but that of a man whose disbelief was not shaken by Mr. Meekins' arguments for infant baptism, which was a great deal worse. But, if the father was hopeless, at least the child was reclaimable. Mabel, brought up under such influences, might become a Baptist or an Anabaptist ! Something must be done. Why not get her to the Sunday school and into Miss Roxby's class ? But her father, with such views of baptism, would certainly object to her learning the Catechism. Never-

theless, it was Mr. Meekins' clear duty to press upon him calmly, but firmly, the propriety of Mabel's instruction in the principles of the Church of her adoption. Accordingly, having braced himself for a desperate struggle, he broached the subject to Colonel Masters, who amazed him by an immediate consent, given as if there was no need to ask it in a matter of such infinitesimal importance. Thus Mabel, through the Sunday-school, was introduced into the world; for through the Roxbys, with whom she soon became intimate, she got to know the Milligans, Deardens, Hawkshaws, etc., and was almost as much in one or other of their houses as in her own. In this way her spirit recovered its spring and elasticity, her shy and shrinking diffidence disappeared, and her natural humour and keen wit came into play. But an acquaintance, however intimate, with the Roxbys, etc., was not satisfying to a nature like Mabel's, and the accident of the illness of one of her scholars (after she had become a teacher herself), which set her upon devoting her spare hours to the sick children of the poor, gave a new turn and zest to her lonely life. It was certainly a singular taste for a girl of nineteen; but some allowance must be made for the singularity of her bringing up.

Mabel being now nineteen, it was quite time, according to Miss Roxby, that she should "come out." Mabel was not particularly anxious for this epiphany, but she was accustomed to bow to Miss Roxby's experience in all social matters.

"But how is it to be done, Miss Roxby?"

"My dear, you must get your father to chaperon you."

At this happy suggestion, the picture of her father's face on being asked to perform this duty, and of his bearing in a ball-room, rising vividly before Mabel, was too much for her gravity.

"I don't see the joke," said Miss Roxby severely; for, though she was intensely matter-of-fact, she feared ridicule as keenly as if she had been of a satirical turn herself.

"I am afraid my father wouldn't see it either," said Mabel, sobered by this severity.

"I don't see the use of all your education if you are not to 'come out,'" Miss Roxby resumed, after a pause, which Mabel was to construe as a lady-like rebuke. "Have you no aunt who could come to stay with you?"

"Yes; there's Aunt Rebecca, but—— Perhaps, though, when father's abroad I might have her."

"He goes abroad always in autumn, doesn't he?"

"Yes, about the middle of August, and stays three months away generally."

"The first of the Assemblies is in the beginning of October; that will do," said Miss Roxby, with judicial decision. "Everybody will be there. A public *début* is much the best."

"Oh, dear! 'coming out' seems a formidable piece of business," said Mabel, a little dismayed; though the portentous solemnity of Miss

Roxby's face impelled her to add, "It couldn't be done by advertisement, I suppose?"

"What?" asked Miss Roxby in perplexity.

Light jests, like soap-bubbles, are not made to be handled, opened, and examined in the way in which Miss Roxby insisted on dissecting them; and besides, Mabel regretted her flippancy in the moment of giving way to it. She owed Miss Roxby a great deal of kindness, and felt ungrateful when she yielded to the temptation to shock her prim sense of propriety. "Only a silly joke, Miss Roxby. I shall do as you decide. It's rather trying to begin with a public ball, but I dare say it's better to plunge in than to wade in."

"The next thing to decide," said Miss Roxby, in the manner of a chairman who had got through a deal of business, and had a deal still to get through—"the next thing to decide upon is—your dress."

"Dress! Why, the fashion may change three times before then."

"Fashions change, but not colours, Mabel," an aphorism which sounded so like a text that it quite imposed on Miss Roxby herself the impression that she was on the borders of a solemn subject. "We must not forget that, my dear. Fashions change, but not colours."

"Always excepting Mr. Pickles' dyes," said Mabel, with a mischievous allusion to a piece of stuff dyed by Mr. Zaccheus Pickles, a brother of the member, whose colours Miss Roxby had not found fast. Mabel felt here on safe ground, as Miss Roxby, by frequent references to this unfortunate purchase, avenged social slights inflicted on her by the member's family.

"And his family in Parliament, too!" snorted Miss Roxby, delighted by the diversion into her favourite grievance.

"It was since they got into Parliament that their colours changed, I am told," said Mabel, emboldened by the reception of her last mild joke. But a political allusion was lost on Miss Roxby.

"Indeed, dear, it was not. It was three years ago last June, and you know his brother has not been member more than a year and a half." And then Miss Roxby recounted the scandalous transaction for the twentieth time, returning at the close of her tale to the serious subject from which she had been diverted—the most becoming style and colour for Mabel's forthcoming costume—a subject in which candour compels us to say our heroine took an unheroic interest.

But arranging about a dress was a small matter compared with arranging about a chaperon. Morning after morning Mabel made her mind up to broach the matter to her father at the close of her reading, but her heart always failed her when it came to the point. At last it occurred to her that it would be easier to confide in an aunt whom she had never seen than to break the business to her father, to whom it would be as unintelligible as his metaphysics were to her. Accordingly she put the whole case before Miss Masters in a letter, which wound up with the request that her aunt would herself propose a visit to her father. Miss Masters was charmed with the *naïveté* of the letter, and still more with

the prospect of chaperonage. There was nothing the old lady liked better than seeing and being seen, visiting and being visited. She did not lose a post, therefore, in announcing to her brother an intended visit to him in September, taking her welcome—as she always did everywhere—for granted. Colonel Masters received and read the letter at breakfast with less disgust than Mabel anticipated. In truth he was unconcerned, because he would be from home in September.

“Your aunt Rebecca writes to say she will come here in September. Will you mind her being in the house?”

He spoke as if Miss Masters was a small-pox patient.

Mabel, who was truthfulness itself, replied with some trepidation, “I wrote to suggest the visit to her, father.”

“I thought you meant, when I was away, to copy those passages I marked,” said her father petulantly.

“So I do, father. I shall have plenty of time in the mornings.”

“Well, her coming doesn’t matter to me, as I shall be away till the latter end of October.”

“But I think she means to stay after your return,” said Mabel, with growing nervousness.

“Why should you think so? She doesn’t say so,” said Colonel Masters, looking again and with more interest at the letter. “No, she merely says she hopes ‘to pay me a visit in September, to make your acquaintance and to take you about.’ What does she mean by ‘taking you about’?”

“To take me to parties, father. It was for that I wanted her to come,” said Mabel desperately.

“Why couldn’t Margaret take you to parties as usual?”

Margaret was Mabel’s old nurse, who had attended her to and from the few children’s parties she had been asked to. It never for a moment occurred to her father that Mabel might consider herself grown up. To him, of course, she was a ~~mere~~ child.

“I am rather too old ~~for~~ ^{for} children’s parties now,” said Mabel with a smile.

“Then why should you ^{think} ~~ask~~ any one to take you about if you don’t care to go to parties?” asked the Colonel, in perplexity.

It was only another instance of the utter unreasonableness of women, and he felt ashamed of the foolish attempt to find a clue in a chance tangle of a thousand and one odds and ends of thread—his conception of a woman’s mind.

“We had better resume our reading,” he continued in a tone of impatient disgust.

He wrote the same day to his sister a letter that would have put off any one but Miss Masters, and received from her in reply a line to say that it didn’t need his note to assure her of a warm welcome. Thus it came to pass that Miss Masters took Miss Murdoch’s place as Mabel’s duenna. For this self-complacent old lady was not easily to be dislodged from quarters she fancied. Not that she *would* not, but that she *could* not imagine herself unwelcome.

CHAPTER VI.

SQUIRE.

POOR little Squire was well visited. Not only George and Mabel, but the Doctor came daily to see him. That gentleman, in fact, was no sooner informed by the child's father that Mr. Pickles senior had ordered the Doctor's bill to be sent in to him, than he redoubled his attentions to his patient. This redoubled zeal, it must be said, not being according to knowledge, was of little service to Squire. Dr. Dredge, being old-fashioned, and practising exclusively among the poor—who value only heroic remedies—bled, blistered, drenched, and drugged as if Death were his paymaster. No one who has not mixed much among the poor can conceive the extravagance of their faith in draughts, drugs, leeches, and blisters, or the pride with which they parade the grim array of medicine-bottles they have emptied; and a doctor, whose practice lies among the poor, would be more than human if he did not pander to this ghoulis passion. Dr. Dredge, who was not above the weaknesses of our common nature, prescribed to suit rather the tastes than the ailments of his patients. He bled, or blistered, or dosed with the most drastic drugs almost every disease on this side of consumption; but in a case like Squire's, where such treatment could not immediately be prescribed, he was at a stand. In such cases he had little experience and less skill. They were taken, almost invariably, to the Infirmary, and Dr. Dredge was not of such standing as to be upon its staff. Fortunately for himself, though unfortunately for his patient, his feelings were as blunt as his surgical skill. Doctors who practise among the very poor exclusively, often grow callous to the sight and to the infliction of pain. And as Dr. Dredge was no exception to the rule, he had not the least compunction in putting the wretched child to intolerable and unnecessary torture, first in groping at the nature and extent of his injuries, and next in his bungling attempts at their cure. He so set the broken bones that they had to be unset and reset within a week, and so badly, even then, that the child, if he lived, would be crippled for life.

However, there was little likelihood of his living. Mrs. Lumb's sympathising neighbours were unanimous in their judgment that he was "baan hooam,"* which they expressed with a frankness that sounded a little brutal as they stood beside Squire's bed. The feelings, like the hands of the poor, grow horny through hardship; and the matter-of-fact way in which the neighbours spoke to Mrs. Lumb, in Squire's hearing, of the certainty of his death and of the expenses of his funeral was revolting to Mabel. Still more revolting to her was the sordid way in which

* "Baan hooam," i.e. going home.

Mrs. Lumb herself often spoke of her probable loss as in great part a pecuniary one. It is hardly too much to say that, in the West Riding, love of money seems as deep and natural an instinct as a mother's love of her child; and mothers there, of the working class, who are weeping for their dead children, recur again and again to the loss of their services or of their wages as a main element of their sorrow. Mabel was too young to make allowance for the sordid lives of which these sordid feelings were the natural outcome, and felt at once repelled from Mrs. Lumb and drawn towards the child, whom she alone seemed disinterestedly concerned for.

"T' Doctor says we mun get all the strong support we can intil him, Miss Masters—sherry wine, or port wine, and some mak' o' stuff he called 'distract o' beef;' but aw'm sewer aw doant know where it's all to come thro, aw doant. Aw've weared more brass * on that bairn than on all the others put together. He war allus gettin' one thing or another—messles, or scarlatina, or t' chincough, or t' browntitus, or whatever war goin'. He *wad* tak' it," she said querulously—as if it was something Squire should have been whipped for stealing; "and aw'd no sooner paid one bill off, a shillin' a week, nor another cam' in, an' Sam war niver off awr doorstones"—Sam was Dr. Dredge's collector of fees. "But aw allus thowt he'd addle summat † some day, an' mak' it up to us. But there's little chonce of his addlir' owt na; an' him a cripple if he mends up—if iver he does mend up, which aw'm afeard he niver will. Dredge gives sma' hopes on him, unless there's a great alteration. He's a bit rough, is Dredge. They mun be hard, mun t' doctors, wi' sich jobs in hand. But he allus did well for me and mine, allus; an aw said to Mrs. Slater last neet—nay, aw'm storying—it war in t' afternoon when shoo cam' in for t' clothes' prop—aw said, 'Mrs. Slater,' aw said, 'if there's owt wrang in t' inside, there's nobbody beats Dredge.'"

"Eh, mun, he *is* gooid at insides!" said Mrs. Greenough, a sympathising neighbour, who had followed Mabel in, out of pure curiosity. "Aw'm sewer when aw had the spavins, ‡ an' thowt it war ovver wi' me, he set me reet wi' an odd § bottle; eh, an' it wor nasty stuff yo' mind! He mayn't be gooid at bones an' that, for he isn't as mich amang it as them Infirmary doctors, but he's a jockey at insides; an' if he could nobbut wark it raand to your Squire's inside he'd mend him up, aw'm sewer he wad."

This indirect and ingenious receipt for curing a compound fracture of the leg by driving it into the stomach, and there securing it—like a rat driven from an inaccessible to an accessible hole—made Mabel smile, in spite of the spectacle of Squire's wan face.

* "Weared more brass," *i.e.* laid out more money.

† "Addle summat," *i.e.* earn something.

‡ "Spavins," *i.e.* spasms.

§ "Odd," *i.e.* single.]

"What do yo' think by him to-day, Miss?" continued Mrs. Greenough, turning to Mabel.

"I am afraid he's no better," said Mabel, putting fresh flowers in the tumbler by the bedside.

"He'll niver mak' mich aat, aw'm thinking," said Mrs. Greenough, looking at him and speaking of him with as little delicacy as if he were a sick animal. "Think on tha send'st t' club brass regular to t' schooil, Mary Ann, there's na knowing how sooin yo' may need it."

"Nay, Squire hisself allus thinks on to send it aat of his own brass, by our Sally, first thing on Sunday morning," answered Mrs. Lumb, to whom this admonition was addressed.

"T' club brass" was a subscription of a penny or two weekly to a Sunday-school sick and burial society, which, on the death of a member, entitled his parents to a few pounds towards his funeral expenses. Poor Squire, made old-fashioned by both illness and poverty, and taught to look on all his sicknesses as selfish luxuries he had no right to indulge in, and on his approaching death as the last and worst of these inconsiderate extravagances, made the amends of paying his subscription to the sick society out of his own money-box. This put in a new light the greedy way in which the child took the few pence he was occasionally given; and Mabel, who had hitherto set this eagerness down to West Riding greed, was struck with a remorse that doubled her tenderness towards him.

"How much money have you now, Squire?" she asked, as she sat by his bedside and took his worn hand in hers.

"Fourpence hawpny. But Mr. Kneeshaw said he'd give me a shilling if I didn't cry when doctor 'xamined me. And I didn't, did I, mother?"

"Eh, Miss, but he was as gooid as gooid! Warn't he, Martha?" to Mrs. Greenough.

"Gooid!" exclaimed Mrs. Greenough. "*Aw* niver seed nowt like it in all my life—niver. T' doctor paanded and pooiled and twisted his legs as if he war kneeding dough—he did. My heart warked for the bairn, as the sweat reet paared daan his face; but he never cried aat, not once. Bless him! Dredge hisself wor capped * wi' him, and said he bet all he iver had to do wi'."

Mabel smoothed back the child's hair and stooped and kissed his forehead with a tenderness she could not trust herself just then to put into words. Tenderness of this kind and expressed in this way was such a surprise to Squire as to suggest to him that he must be dying. His probable death had been discussed and discounted before him so often, and in so matter-of-fact a way, that the idea of it was neither new nor terrifying to him. It was made up in his mind of an idea of heaven—which he pictured as like a Whitsuntide school treat, when the Sunday-school children marched with a band and banners to a field, and played

* "Capped," i.e. surprised.

and had buns, and an idea of such a scolding as he got invariably when he came back from the field with his new Whitsuntide suit soiled or torn. Indeed, he had heard enough to know that his death would cost his parents a good deal more than a suit of clothes, and would therefore be a proportionately greater grievance. And, as he wasn't by any means a bad-hearted little chap, there was mixed up with these two ideas a third, which troubled him not a little—that there would be no mother, nor Miss Masters, nor Sally in heaven. After meditating these things a minute, he said, "Mother, where's our Sally?"

"Shoo's gone to t' coöp, doy; shoo'll be back sooin."

"She may have the grapes, mayn't she, mother?"

Sally, it seemed, had cried for some grapes Mr. Kneeshaw the day before had left for Squire, and which Squire would then have shared with her but for his mother's indignant intervention.

"Nay, doy, tha munnot gie away them grapes. What 'ud Mr. Kneeshaw say?"

Mr. Kneeshaw's name turned his mind, which wandered easily now, back to the balloon and the accident.

"I couldn't help it, mother."

"What, doy?"

"Being runned over. Mr. Kneeshaw said it wasn't me that did it."

"It wor to be," replied his mother, with a fatalism universal among the poor. "Tha wor allus an unlucky bairn iver sin' tha wor born."

Mabel, who, with the sympathy of love and of long experience of children, had got the clue to the child's thoughts, tried to counteract this ungracious speech.

"You! of course it wasn't your fault, Squire. Do you think Mr. Pickles would send the doctor to see you if it was your fault?"

Squire, who certainly had little reason to be thankful for Dr. Dredge's attentions, was anything but reassured by this evidence of Mr. Pickles' feeling towards him. So, disregarding this comfort, he turned to another.

"Mr. Kneeshaw was runned over too," he said, in an accent and with a look at Mabel that plainly expressed, "It couldn't have been a scrape if Mr. Kneeshaw was in it; could it?"

It was a very effective *argumentum ad hominem*, and Mabel didn't like the lad the less for his faith in Mr. Kneeshaw.

"Who has been putting it into the child's head that he is to blame for the accident?" asked Mabel, with some of the irritation she felt towards Mrs. Lumb in her voice. "I can't think how any one could be so cruel and heartless as to say such a thing. You know very well, Mrs. Lumb, that he was no more to blame for it than you were."

This unlucky speech was at once and of course interpreted by Mrs. Lumb to mean that she alone was to blame for it. We can hardly say whether West Riding people are readier to give or to take offence. Not in the least sensitive as to your feelings, they are extremely sensitive in

their own. Mrs. Lumb's feelings of gratitude and respect towards Mabel were strong, but, strong as they were, they nearly went down before the shock of this sudden attack.

"Me, Miss!" she cried, in breathless amazement; "me to blame! What war aw to do wi' him? War aw to tee him to t' bed fooit to keep him aat o' street? How many hunerd times have aw telled him to coome hooam straight thro' schooil, and not to lake * wi' t' lads up and daan and in and aat in all mak's of mischeef? Nay, nobbody can say aw've not been a gooid mother till him, and warmed † him times and times when he has been laking and loitering and coomed hoam lat' thro' day-schooil or Sunday-schooil wi' his bits o' things all ovver muck. And if he'd been at hooam when t' accident happened," she asked triumphantly, "wad he have been runned ovver? What are ta cryin' for?" she interrupted herself to say, in a voice still sharp, but softened somewhat at sight of Squire's tears. Squire, like most Yorkshire lads, was stoical as an Indian when well, but weakness had so unstrung him as to set him crying at the thought that he had got Miss Masters into a scrape. When his mother was half through her harangue, his hand stole from under the coverlid instinctively to console Mabel, as he would have consoled Sally, by putting his arm round her neck. But as, of course, this was not to be thought of, his hand, stopping half way, nestled itself timidly in hers, and he expressed the rest of his sympathy in tears, of which he was thoroughly ashamed. He felt he had lost the character he had earned by not crying when the doctor was torturing him. He hid his head in the bedclothes, wiped his tears away with them, and, looking out again with a defiant face, said, in a voice that "protested too much," "I am not crying;" and then, with great presence of mind, changed the subject by asking Mabel a question which had been much in his thoughts since her last visit—"Please, Miss Masters, why couldn't they take the press away?" This mysterious question referred to the miracle Mabel had read for him, in which the sufferer had been let down through the roof when he could not be brought through the door "for the press." Squire thought it harder to take the roof away than "the press," of which his idea was the press-bed on which he lay; and that there must therefore be some mysterious and malign influence in a "press" which made against such a miracle being worked in his own case. While this difficulty was being explained by him and to him, Mrs. Greenough, who associated anything religious with church, and church with her best clothes, became conscious of the profanity of her toilet, and made hastily but softly for the door. Here her reverential impressions were confirmed by her meeting no less than two parsons, Revs. Archer Lawley and George Kneeshaw—two spiritual doctors who, she imagined, were met together in consultation over the difficult case of the dying child.

* "Lake," *i.e.* play.

† "Warmed," *i.e.* whipped.

Mr. Archer Lawley's appearance on the scene was an apt illustration of the lesson Mabel was giving the child—that such cures as the Gospel records were not wrought to-day directly, but intermediately. For Mr. Lawley came to make Mrs. Lumb the extraordinary offer to give Squire the one chance of life that remained, of better air, food, and advice, by taking him to his own vicarage in the country. We must explain that Mr. Lawley justified all that his friends said of his eccentricity by turning his house into a convalescent hospital for the sick children of the very poor. Wretched little creatures that were fading fast in the foul and festering back slums of Wefton, revived miraculously when transplanted to Fenton Vicarage, where there were provided for them not only pure air, good food, the care of a professional nurse, and the skill of the first doctor in Wefton, but games, toys, treats, and amusements of the most miscellaneous kind. Mr. Lawley, who was a bachelor, spent upon this craze something more than the income he had from the Church, and lived himself on his private means, which were not large, and by his pen. He no sooner heard from Kneeshaw of Squire's case than he offered to take it under his care, and the two had come together to make this offer to Mrs. Lumb. Fortunately for Squire, exaggerated accounts of Parson Lawley's good deeds and miraculous cures had reached Mrs. Lumb, so that she no sooner heard his name than she divined and rejoiced over his errand. Such accounts had reached Mabel also, who naturally so appreciated a kindred craze to her own that she looked up at Mr. Lawley with a beautiful expression of hero-worship when George introduced him to her. Mr. Lawley, a very tall man, foreign-looking, with a cynical mouth, but not unkindly eyes of a soft deep brown, blushed under her gaze. His self-possession, which would have been proof against the presence of an archbishop, often left him in the presence of ladies, and he was disconcerted by the sight of the loveliest face he had ever seen, looking up at him with a childlike admiration. He muttered something about intruding, and would then and there have beaten a hasty retreat, leaving to Kneeshaw the arrangement of the affair, if Mrs. Lumb had allowed him. That good lady, however, intercepted his retreat, and saved him and Mr. Kneeshaw any delicacy or difficulty they might have felt about broaching the subject, by taking upon herself the modest duty.

"Sit thee daan, Sir," she said, wiping a chair with her apron; "aw'm fain to see yo'. Yo've coomed, aw reckon, to ax awr Squire to your haase. Well, aw'm nowt agin it. Yo' can tak' him if yo've a mind."

Neither Mr. Lawley nor Mr. Kneeshaw was in the least surprised by Mrs. Lumb's modesty and magnanimity, for both had experience enough of the West Riding poor to know that, however grateful they feel at heart—and no one can accuse them of ingratitude—they accept a favour as if they were conferring it.

"I think the change would do him good, Mrs. Lumb," said Mr. Lawley, as courteously as if Mrs. Lumb really was doing him a kindness.

"It is so good of you, Mr. Lawley," burst in Mabel, eager to cover and make up for Mrs. Lumb's ungraciousness, yet blushing at the same time with the consciousness that praise from her might sound patronising or presumptuous. The imperturbable Mr. Lawley seemed, to Kneeshaw's amazement, absolutely to return the blush as he muttered something like "Not at all," and turned to ask Squire if he would like to come to Fenton. Squire had heard of Fenton Vicarage from the same source as his mother—from a schoolfellow who lived in an alley off Sugg Lane, and who had spent a month in that paradise, of which he had never ceased to talk since.

"Please, may mother and Sally come to see me?"

"Of course they may."

"And Miss Masters?"

This was a very awkward request. Mrs. MacGucken, Mr. Lawley's housekeeper and hospital nurse, who ruled him with a rod of iron, would as soon see a bailiff as a spinster in the house, since neither could have any other business there than "to take" the master. Accordingly, she was simply brutal in her manner to any eligible spinster who entered the vicarage under any pretence or pretext whatsoever. For Mr. Lawley, therefore, to invite Miss Masters and her chaperon (who, he supposed, would be her mother) to meet such a reception as Mrs. MacGucken would give them, would be more inhospitable than to discourage them. Yet he would have been more brutal even than Mrs. MacGucken herself, if he made no response to Squire's suggestion.

"I am sure," he said hesitatingly, "I shall be very glad if Miss Masters will honour my house with a visit; but I'm afraid——"

"Thank you very much," interrupted Mabel, hastening to the relief of his evident embarrassment; "but I really couldn't think of coming, except on crutches or in consumption. You don't take in anything short of that, Mr. Lawley?" she rattled on with a flippancy which seemed, under the circumstances, the truest politeness, as Mr. Lawley was slow to recover from his embarrassment. "Besides, I expect Squire will be so much better as to be able to come to see me before I could get my aunt to make her mind up for an expedition to Fenton. She thinks any place you get by train to must be an immense distance off. It's a good way for Squire to be moved to, I am afraid."

"It's something over five miles," replied Mr. Lawley; "but once you get clear of the town, the road is good.—When may I send for him, Mrs. Lumb?"

The question helped Mrs. Lumb to realise her separation from Squire, which she felt all the more keenly because she had had so much to do for him; and her tears, which began now to flow freely, affected Squire. It was a bitter mortification to be unable to choke back his tears. Could Mr. Kneeshaw now believe that he hadn't cried yesterday, when Dr. Dredge had given him good reason? Yet, somehow, the sight of his mother's tears, and the thought of leaving her and Sally and Mabel,

melted him, while Dr. Dredge's bungling brutality had only hardened him.

"Doan't freeat, doy. Me and Sally will coome see thee," cried Mrs. Lumb, as she dried her own tears in her apron.

"She won't," sobbed the child, nodding his head towards Mabel. "Mother!"

"What, doy?"

But Squire wouldn't tell her what, till she had stooped down to hear it in a whisper.

"Nay, aw couldn't for shame ax her. Eh, Miss, but he thinks the warld o' thee!"

"Is it anything I can do for him, Mrs. Lumb?"

"'Deed, Miss, aw can hardly fashion to tell thee. He wants thee to kiss him as tha did a bit sin'."

As Mabel was about to stoop to kiss the child, George and Mr. Lawley held their hands out to bid her good-bye, and telling Mrs. Lumb what hour the cab would come to-morrow for Squire, they left the house together. When Mabel did stoop to kiss him, the poor little chap put both his arms round her neck, and cried, and clung convulsively to her till Mabel's cheek was wet with other tears beside his.

George Eliot.

HAD we been asked, a few weeks ago, to name the greatest living writer of English fiction, the answer would have been unanimous. No one—whatever might be his special personal predilections—would have refused that title to George Eliot. To ask the same question now would be to suggest some measure of our loss. In losing George Eliot we have probably lost the greatest woman who ever won literary fame, and one of the very few writers of our day to whom the name “great” could be conceded with any plausibility. We are not at a sufficient distance from the object of our admiration to measure its true elevation. We are liable to a double illusion on the morrow of such events. In political life we fancy that all heroism is extinct with the dead leader, whilst there are within the realm five hundred good as he. Yet the most daring optimist can hardly suppose that consolatory creed to be generally true in literature. If contemporaries sometimes exaggerate, they not unfrequently underestimate their loss. When Shakespeare died, nobody imagined—we may suspect—that the English drama had touched its highest point. When men are crossing the lines which divide one of the fruitful from one of the barren epochs in literature, they are often but faintly conscious of the change. It would require no paradoxical ingenuity to maintain that we are even now going through such a transition. The works of George Eliot may hereafter appear as marking the termination of the great period of English fiction which began with Scott. She may hereafter be regarded as the last great sovereign of a literary dynasty, who had to bequeath her sceptre to a comparatively petty line of successors: though—for anything that we can say to the contrary—it may also be true that the successor may appear to-morrow, or may even be now amongst us in the shape of some writer who is struggling against a general want of recognition.

Ephemeral critics must not pretend to pronounce too confidently upon such questions. They can only try to say, in Mr. Browning's phrase, how it strikes a contemporary. And a contemporary is prompted by the natural regret to stray into irrelevant reflections, and dwell needlessly in the region of might-have-beens. Had George Eliot lived a little longer, or begun to write a little earlier, or been endowed with some additional quality which she did not in fact possess, she might have done greater things still. It is very true, and true of others besides George Eliot. It often seems as if even the greatest works of the greatest writers were but fragmentary waifs and strays—mere indications of more splendid achievements which would have been within

their grasp, had they not been forced, like weaker people, to feel out the way to success through comparative failure, or to bend their genius to unworthy tasks. So, of the great writers in her own special department, Fielding wasted his powers in writing third-rate plays till he was five-and-thirty, and died a broken-down man at forty-seven. Scott did not appear in the field of his greatest victories till he was forty-three, and all his really first-rate work was done within the next ten years. George Eliot's period of full activity, the time during which she was conscientiously doing her best under the stimulus of high reputation, lasted some twenty years; and so long a space is fully up to the average of the time allowed to most great writers. If not a voluminous writer, according to the standard of recent novelists, she has left enough work, representative of her powers at their best, to give a full impress of her mind.

So far, I think, we have little reason for regret. When once a writer has managed to express the best that was in him to say, the question of absolute mass is trifling. Though some very great have also been very voluminous writers, the immortal part of their achievement bears a slight proportion to the whole. Goethe lived to a good old age, and never lapsed into indolence: yet all of Goethe that is really of the highest excellence will go into some half-dozen volumes. Putting aside Scott, hardly any great English writer has left a greater quantity of work representing the highest level of the author's capacity than is equivalent to the *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Adam Bede*, the *Mill on the Floss*, *Silas Marner*, *Romola*, and *Middlemarch*. Certainly, she might have done more. She did not begin to write novels till a period at which many popular authors are already showing symptoms of exhaustion, and indulging in the perilous practice of self-imitation. Why, it may be said, did not George Eliot write immortal works in her youth, instead of translating German authors of a heterodox tendency? If we could arrange all such things to our taste, and could foresee a writer's powers from the beginning, we might have ordered matters differently. Yet one may observe that there is another side to the question. Imaginative minds often ripen quickly; and much of the finest poetry in the language derives its charm from the freshness of youth. But writers of the contemplative order—those whose best works represent the general experience of a rich and thoughtful nature—may be expected to come later to their maturity. The phenomenon of early exhaustion is too common in these days to allow us to regret an occasional exception. If during her youth George Eliot was storing the thoughts and emotions which afterwards shaped themselves into the *Scenes of Clerical Life*, we need not suppose that the time was wasted. Certainly, I do not think that any one who has had a little experience in such matters would regard it as otherwise than dangerous for a powerful mind to be precipitated into public utterance. The Pythagorean probation of silence may be protracted too long; but it may afford a most useful discipline: and I think that there is

nothing preposterous in the supposition that George Eliot's work was all the more powerful because it came from a novelist who had lain fallow through a longer period than ordinary.

If it is rather idle to pursue such speculations, it is still more idle to indulge in that kind of criticism which virtually comes to saying that George Eliot ought to have been Walter Scott or Charlotte Brontë. You may think her inferior to those writers; you may dislike her philosophy or her character; and you are fully justified in expressing your dislike. But it is only fair to ask whether the qualities which you disapprove were mere external and adventitious familiarities or the inseparable adjunct of those which you admire. It is important to remember this in considering some of the common criticisms. The poor woman was not content simply to write amusing stories. She is convicted upon conclusive evidence of having indulged in ideas; she ventured to speculate upon human life and its meaning, and still worse, she endeavoured to embody her convictions in imaginative shapes, and probably wished to infect her readers with them. This was, according to some people, highly unbecoming in a woman and very inartistic in a novelist. I confess that, for my part, I am rather glad to find ideas anywhere. They are not very common; and there are a vast number of excellent fictions which these sensitive critics may study without the least danger of a shock to their artistic sensibilities by anything of the kind. But if you will permit a poor novelist to indulge in such awkward possessions, I cannot see why he or she should not be allowed occasionally to interweave them in her narrative, taking care of course to keep them in their proper place. Some of that mannerism which offends many critics represents in fact simply George Eliot's way of using this privilege. We are indeed told dogmatically that a novelist should never indulge in little asides to the reader. Why not? One main advantage of a novel, as it seems to me, is precisely that it leaves room for a freedom in such matters which is incompatible with the requirements, for example, of dramatic writing. I can enjoy Scott's downright story-telling, which never reminds you obtrusively of the presence of the author; but with all respect for Scott, I do not see why his manner should be the sole type and model for all his successors. I like to read about Tom Jones or Colonel Newcome; but I am also very glad when Fielding or Thackeray puts his puppets aside for the moment and talks to me in his own person. A child, it is true, dislikes to have the illusion broken, and is angry if you try to persuade him that Giant Despair was not a real personage like his favourite Blunderbore. But the attempt to produce such illusions is really unworthy of work intended for full-grown readers. The humorist in particular knows that you will not mistake his puppet-show for reality, nor does he wish you to do so. He is rather of opinion that the world itself is a greater puppet-show, not to be taken in too desperate earnest. It is congenial to his whole mode of thought to act occasionally as chorus, and dwell upon some incidental suggestion.

The solemn critic may step forward, like the physician who attended Sancho Panza's meal, and waive aside the condiment which gives a peculiar relish to the feast. It is not prepared according to his recipe. But till he gives me some better reason for obedience than his *ipse dixit*, I shall refuse to respect what would destroy many charming passages and obliterate touches which clearly contribute to the general effect of George Eliot's work.

Were it not indeed that some critics in authority have dwelt upon this supposed defect, I should be disposed simply to plead "not guilty," for I think that any one who reads the earlier books with the criticism in his mind, and notes the passages which are really obnoxious upon this ground, will be surprised at the rarity of the passages to which it applies. One cannot help suspecting that what is really offensive is not so much the method itself as the substance of the reflections introduced, and occasionally the cumbrous style in which they are expressed. And upon these points there is more to be said. But it is more desirable, if one can do it, to say what George Eliot was than what she was not; and to try to catch the secret of her unique power rather than to dwell upon shortcomings, some of which, to say the truth, are so obvious that it requires little critical acumen to discover them, and a decided tinge of antipathy to dwell upon them at length.

What is it, in fact, which makes us conscious that George Eliot had a position apart; that, in a field where she had so many competitors of no mean capacity, she stands out as superior to all her rivals; or that, whilst we can easily imagine that many other reputations will fade with a change of fashion, there is something in George Eliot which we are confident will give delight to our grandchildren as it has to ourselves? To such questions there is one obvious answer at hand. There is one part of her writings upon which every competent reader has dwelt with delight, and which seems fresher and more charming whenever we come back to it. There is no danger of arousing any controversy in saying that the works of her first period, the *Scenes of Clerical Life*, *Adam Bede*, *Silas Marner*, and the *Mill on the Floss*, have the unmistakable mark of high genius. They are something for which it is simply out of the question to find any substitute. Strike them out of English literature, and we feel that there would be a gap not to be filled up; a distinct vein of thought and feeling unrepresented; a characteristic and delightful type of social development left without any adequate interpreter. A second-rate writer can be more or less replaced. When you have read Shakespeare, you can do very well without Beaumont and Fletcher, and a study of the satires of Pope makes it unnecessary to plod through the many volumes filled by his imitators. But we feel that, however much we may admire the other great English novelists, there is none who would make the study of George Eliot superfluous. The sphere which she has made specially her own is that quiet English country life which she knew in early youth. It has been described with more or less vivacity

and sympathy by many observers. Nobody has approached George Eliot in the power of seizing its essential characteristics and exhibiting its real charm. She has done for it what Scott did for the Scotch peasantry, or Fielding for the eighteenth century Englishman, or Thackeray for the higher social stratum of his time. Its last traces are vanishing so rapidly amidst the changes of modern revolution, that its picture could hardly be drawn again, even if there were an artist of equal skill and penetration. And thus, when the name of George Eliot is mentioned, it calls up, to me at least, and, I suspect, to most readers, not so much her later and more ambitious works, as the exquisite series of scenes so lovingly and vividly presented in the earlier stage: snuffy old Mr. Gilfil, drinking his gin-and-water in his lonely parlour, with his faithful Ponto snoring on the rug and dreaming of the early romance of his life; and the inimitable Mrs. Poyser in her exquisite dairy, delivering her soul in a series of pithy aphorisms, bright as the little flames in Mr. Biglow's pastoral, that "danced about the chaney on the dresser;" and the party in the parlour of the "Rainbow" discussing the evidences for "ghos'es;" or the family conclaves in which the affairs of the Tulliver family were discussed from so many and such admirably contrasted points of view. Where shall we find a more delightful circle, or quainter manifestations of human character, in beings grotesque, misshapen, and swathed in old prejudices, like the mossy trees in an old-fashioned orchard, which, for all their vagaries of growth, are yet full of sap and capable of bearing mellow and toothsome fruit? "It was pleasant to Mr. Tryan," as we are told in *Janet's Repentance*, "to listen to the simple chat of the old man—to walk in the shade of the incomparable orchard and hear the story of the crops yielded by the red-streaked apple-tree, and the quite embarrassing plentifulness of the summer pears—to drink in the sweet evening breath of the garden as they sat in the alcove—and so, for a short interval, to feel the strain of his pastoral task relaxed." Our enjoyment is analogous to Mr. Tryan's. We are soothed by the atmosphere of the old-world country life, where people, no doubt, had as many troubles as ours, but troubles which, because they were different, seem more bearable to our imagination. We half wish that we could go back to the old days of stage-coaches and wagons and shambling old curates in "Brutus wigs," preaching to slumberous congregations enshrouded in high-backed pews, contemplating as little the advent of railways as of a race of clergymen capable of going to prison upon a question of ritual.

So far, indeed, it can hardly be said that George Eliot is unique. She has been approached, if she has not been surpassed, by other writers in her idyllic effects. But there is something less easily paralleled in the peculiar vein of humour which is the essential complement of the more tender passages. Mrs. Poyser is necessary to balance the solemnity of Dinah Morris. Silas Marner would lose half his impressiveness if he were not in contrast with the inimitable party in the "Rainbow."

parlour. Omit the few pages in which their admirable conversation is reported, and the whole harmony of the book would be altered. The change would be as fatal as to strike out a figure in some perfect composition, where the most trifling accessory may really be an essential part of the whole design. It might throw some light upon George Eliot's peculiar power if we could fairly analyse the charm of that little masterpiece. Psychologists are very fond of attempting to define the nature of wit and humour. Hitherto they have not been very successful, though, of course, their failure cannot be due to any want of personal appreciation of those qualities. But I should certainly despair of giving any account of the pleasure which one receives from that famous conflict of rustic wits. Why are we charmed by Ben Winthrop's retort to the parish clerk: "It's your inside as isn't right made for music; it's no better nor a hollow stalk;" and the statement that this "unflinching frankness was regarded by the company as the most piquant form of joke;" or by the landlord's ingenious remarks upon the analogy between a power of smelling cheeses and perceiving the supernatural; or by that quaint stumble into something surprising to the speaker himself by its apparent resemblance to witty repartee, when the same person says to the farrier: "You're a doctor, I reckon, though you're only a cow-doctor; for a fly's a fly, though it may be a horse-fly"? One can understand at a proper distance how a clever man comes to say a brilliant thing, and it is still more easy to understand how he can say a thoroughly silly thing, and, therefore, how he can simulate stupidity. But there is something mysterious in the power possessed by a few great humorists of converting themselves for the nonce into that peculiar condition of muddle-headedness dashed with grotesque flashes of common-sense which is natural to a half-educated mind. It is less difficult to draw either a perfect circle or a purely arbitrary line than to see what will be the proportion of the regular figure on some queer, lop-sided, and imperfectly-reflecting surface. And these quaint freaks of rustic intelligence seem to be rags and tatters of what would make wit and reason in a cultivated mind, but when put together in this grotesque kaleidoscopic confusion suggests, not simple nonsense, but a ludicrous parody of sense. To reproduce the effect, you have not simply to lower the activity of the reasoning machine, but to put it together on some essential plan, so as to bring out a new set of combinations distantly recalling the correct order. We require not a new defect of logic, but a new logical structure.

There is no answer to this as to any other such problems. It is enough to take note of the fact that George Eliot possessed a vein of humour, of which it is little to say that it is incomparably superior, in depth if not in delicacy, to that of any feminine writer. It is the humour of a calm contemplative mind, familiar with wide fields of knowledge, and capable of observing the little dramas of rustic life from a higher standing-point. It is not—in these earlier books at any rate—that she obtrudes her acquisitions upon us; for if here and there we

find some of those scientific illusions which afterwards became a kind of mannerism, they are introduced without any appearance of forcing. It is simply that she is awake to those quaint aspects of the little world before her which only show their quaintness to the cultivated intellect. We feel that there must be a silent guest in the chimney-corner of the "Rainbow," so thoroughly at home with the natives as to put no stress upon their behaviour, and yet one who has travelled out of sight of the village spire, and known the thoughts and feelings which are stirring in the great world outside. The guest can at once sympathise and silently criticise; or rather, in the process of observation, carries on the two processes simultaneously by recognising at once the little oddities of the microcosm, and yet seeing them as merely one embodiment of the same thoughts and passions which present themselves on a larger scale elsewhere. It is in this happy combination of two characteristics often disjoined that we have one secret of George Eliot's power. There is the breadth of touch, the large-minded equable spirit of loving contemplative thought, which is fully conscious of the narrow limitations of the actor's thoughts and habits, but does not cease on that account to sympathise with his joys and sorrows. We are on a petty stage, but not in a stifling atmosphere, and we are not called upon to accept the prejudices of the actors or to be angry with them, but simply to understand and be tolerant. We have neither the country idyl of the sentimentalist which charms us in some of George Sand's stories of French life, but in which our enjoyment is checked by the inevitable sense of unreality, nor the caricature of the satirist who is anxious to proclaim the truth that base passions and grovelling instincts are as common in country towns as in court and city. Everything is quietly set before us with a fine sense of its wider relations, and yet with a loving touch, significant of a pathetic yearning for the past, which makes the whole picture artistically charming. We are reminded in Mr. Gilfil's love-story how, whilst poor little Tina was fretting over her wrongs, the "stream of human thought and deed was hurrying and broadening around." "What were our little Tina and her trouble in this mighty torrent, rushing from one awful unknown to another? Lighter than the smallest centre of quivering life in the water-drop—hidden and uncared for as the pulse of anguish in the breast of the tiniest bird that has fluttered down to its nest with the long-sought food, and has found the nest torn and empty." It is this constant reference, tacit or express, suggested by pathetic touches, and by humorous exhibition of the incongruities and contrasts of the little drama of village life to the outer world beyond, and to the wider universe in which it too is an atom, that distinctly raises George Eliot above the level of many merely picturesque descriptions of similar scenes. We feel that the artist is at an intellectual elevation high enough to be beyond the illusions of the city fashion; but the singular charm springs out of the tender affection which reproduces the little world left so far behind and hallowed by the romance of early association.

George Eliot's own view of the matter is given in more than one of these objectionable "asides" of which we have had to speak. She entreats us to try to see the poetry and the pathos, the tragedy and the comedy, to be found in the experience of poor dingy Amos Barton. She rarely looks, she says, at "a bent old man or a wizened old woman" without seeing "the past of which they are the shrunken remnant; and the unfinished romance of rosy cheeks and bright eyes seems sometimes of feeble interest and significance compared with that drama of hope and love which has long ago reached its catastrophe, and left the poor soul, like a dim and dusty stage, with all its sweet garden scenes and fair perspectives overturned and thrust out of sight." To reflect that we ought to see; to possess true eyes—really to see what we know that we ought to see—is to possess true genius. George Eliot is not laying down a philosophical maxim to be proved and illustrated, but is attempting to express the animating principle of a labour of love. Mr. Gilfil, the person who suggests this remark, is the embodiment of the abstract principle, and makes us feel that it is no empty profession. Everybody has noticed how admirably George Eliot has portrayed certain phases of religious feeling with which, in one sense, she had long ceased to sympathise. Amongst the subsidiary actors in her stories, none are more tenderly and lovingly touched than the old-fashioned parsons and dissenting preachers—Barton and Gilfil and Tryan, and Irwin and Dinah Morris in *Adam Bede*, and Mr. Lyon in *Felix Holt*. I do not know that they or their successors would have much call to be grateful. For, in truth, it is plain enough that the interest is in the kindly old-fashioned parson, considered as a valuable factor in the social system, and that his creed is not taken to be the source of his strength; whilst the few Methodists and the brethren in Lantern Yard are regarded as attaining a very imperfect and stammering version of truths capable of being very completely dis severed from their dogmatic teaching. In any case, her breach with the creed of her youth involved no breach of the ties formed by early reverence for its representatives. The change involved none of the bitterness which is sometimes generated by a spiritual revolt. Dickens—who is sometimes supposed to represent the version of modern Christianity—could apparently see nothing in a dissenting preacher but an unctuous and sensual hypocrite—a vulgarised Tartuffe such as Stiggins and Chadband. If George Eliot had been the mere didactic preacher of mere critics, she might have set before us mere portraits of spiritual pride or clerical charlatanism. But, whatever her creed, she was too deep a humorist, too thoughtful and too tender, to fall into such an error. She never sinned against the "natural piety" which should bind our days together. The tender regard which she had retained for all the surroundings of her youth did not fail towards those whose teaching had once roused her reverence, and which could never become the objects of indiscriminate antipathy.

In this one may perhaps say George Eliot was a true woman. Women, indeed, can be fully as bitter in their resentment as the harsher sex; but their bitterness seems to be generated in the attempt to outdo their masculine rivals, and to imply perverted rather than deficient sensibility. They seldom exhibit pachydermatous indifference to their neighbour's emotions. The so-called masculine quality in George Eliot—her wide and calm intelligence—was certainly combined with a thoroughly feminine nature; and the more one reads her books and notes her real triumphs, the more strongly this comes out. The poetry and pathos which she seeks to reveal under commonplace surroundings is found chiefly in feminine hearts. Each of the early books is the record of an ordeal endured by some suffering woman. In the *Scenes of Clerical Life* the interest really centres in the women whose fate is bound up with the acts of the clerical heroes; it is Janet and Molly Barton in whom we are really interested; and if poor little Tina is too weak to be a heroine, her vigorous struggle against the destinies is the pivot of the story. That George Eliot succeeded remarkably in some male portraits, and notably in Tom Tulliver, is undeniable. Yet the men were often simply women in disguise. The piquancy, for example, of the famous character of Tito is greatly due to the fact that he is the voluptuous, selfish, but sensitive character, not unfamiliar in the fiction which deals with social intrigues, but generally presented to us in feminine costume. We are told of Daniel Deronda, upon whose character an extraordinary amount of analysis is expended, that he combined a feminine affectionateness with masculine inflexibility. To our perceptions, the feminine vein becomes decidedly the most prominent; and this is equally true of such characters as Philip Wakem and Mr. Lyon. Adam Bede, indeed, to mention no one else, is a thorough man. He represents, it would seem, that ideal of masculine strength which Miss Brontë used with curious want of success to depict in Louis Moore—the firm arm, the offer of which (as we are told *à propos* of Maggie Tulliver and the offensive Stephen Guest) has in it “something strangely winning to most women.” Yet if Adam Bede had shown less Christian forbearance to young Squire Donnithorne, we should have been more convinced that he was of masculine fibre throughout.

Here we approach more disputable matters. George Eliot's early books owe their charm to the exquisite painting of the old country-life—an achievement made possible by a tender imagination brooding over a vanishing past—but, if we may make the distinction, they owe their greatness to the insight into passions not confined to one race or period. Janet Dempster would lose much of her charm if she were transplanted from Milby to London; but she would still be profoundly interesting as representing a marked type of feminine character. Balzac—or somebody else—said, or is said to have said—that there were only seven possible plots in fiction. Without pledging oneself to the particular

number, one may admit that the number of radically different motives is remarkably small. It may be added that even great writers rarely show their highest capacity in more than one of these typical situations. It is not hard to say which is George Eliot's favourite theme. We may call it—speaking with proper reserve—the woman in need of a confessor. We may have the comparatively shallow nature, the poor wilful little Tina, or Hetty or Tessa—the mere plaything of fate, whom we pity because in her childish ignorance she is apt, like little Red Ridinghood, to mistake the wolf for a friend, though not exactly to take him for a grandmother. Or we have the woman with noble aspirations—Janet, or Dinah, or Maggie, or Romola, or Dorothea, or, may we add, Daniel Deronda—who recognises more clearly her own need of guidance, and even in failure has the lofty air of martyrdom. It is in the setting such characters before us that George Eliot has achieved her highest triumphs, and made some of her most unmistakable failures. It is here that we meet the complaint that she is too analytic; that she takes the point of view of the confessor rather than the artist; and is more anxious to probe the condition of her heroines' souls, to give us an accurate diagnosis of their spiritual complaints, and an account of their moral evolution, than to show us the character in action. If I must give my own view, I must venture a distinction. To say that George Eliot's stories are interesting as studies of human nature, is really to say little more than that they deserve serious attention. There are stories—and very excellent and amusing stories—which have comparatively little to do with character; histories of wondrous and moving events, where you are fascinated by the vivacity of the narrator without caring much for the passions of the actors—such stories, in fact, as compose the *Arabian Nights*, or the voluminous works of the admirable Alexandre Dumas. We do not care to understand Aladdin's sentiments, or to say how far he differed from Sinbad and Camaralzaman. The famous musketeers have different parts to play, and so far different characters; but one does not care very much for their psychology. Still, every serious writer must derive his power from his insight into men and women. A Cervantes or Shakespeare, a Scott, a Fielding, a Richardson or Thackeray, command our attention by forcible presentation of certain types of character; and, so far, George Eliot's does not differ from her predecessors'. Nor, again, would any truly imaginative writer give us mere abstract analyses of character, instead of showing us the concrete person in action. If George Eliot has a tendency to this error it does not appear in her early period. We can see any of her best characters as distinctly, we know them by direct vision as intimately, as we know any personage in real or fictitious history. We are not put off with the formulæ of their conduct, but persons are themselves revealed to us. Yet it is, I think, true that her stories are pre-eminently studies of character in this sense, that her main and conscious purpose is to set before us the living beings in what

may be called, with due apology, their statical relations—to show them, that is, in their quiet and normal state, not under the stress of exceptional events. When we once know *Adam Bede* or *Dinah Morris*, we care comparatively little for the development of the plot. Compare, for example, *Adam Bede* with the *Heart of Midlothian*, the first half of which seems to me to be one of the very noblest of all fictions, though the latter part suffers from the conventional madwoman and the bit of commonplace intrigue which Scott fancied himself bound to introduce. *Jeanie Deans* is, to my mind, a more powerfully drawn and altogether a more substantial and satisfactory young woman than *Dinah Morris*, who, with all her merits, seems to me, I will confess, to be a bit of a prig. The contrast, however, to which I refer is in the method rather than in the characters or the situation. Scott wishes to interest us in the magnificent trial scene, for which all the preceding narrative is a preparation; he is content to set the *Deans* family before us with a few amazingly vigorous touches, so that we may thoroughly enter into the spirit of the tremendous ordeal through which poor *Jeanie Deans* is to pass in the conflict between affection and duty. We first learn to know her thoroughly by her behaviour under that overpowering strain. But in *Adam Bede* we learn first to know the main actors by their conduct in a number of little scenes, most admirably devised and drawn, and serving to bring out, if not a more powerful, a more elaborate and minute manifestation of their inmost feelings. When we come to the critical parts in the story, and the final catastrophe, they are less interesting and vivid than the preliminary detail of apparently insignificant events. The trial and the arrival of the reprieve are probably the weakest and most commonplace passages; and what we really remember and enjoy are the little scenes on the village green, in Mrs. Poyser's dairy, and *Adam Bede's* workshop. We have there learnt to know the people themselves, and we scarcely care for what happens to them. The method is natural to a feminine observer who has learnt to interpret character by watching its manifestations in little every-day incidents, and feels comparatively at a loss when having to deal with the more exciting struggles and calamities which make a noise in the world. And therefore, as I think, George Eliot is always more admirable in careful exposition—in setting her personages before us—than in dealing with her catastrophes, where, to say the truth, she sometimes seems to become weak just when we expect her full powers to be exerted.

This is true, for example, of *Silas Marner*, where the inimitable opening is very superior to the sequel. It is still more conspicuously true of the *Mill on the Floss*. The first part of that novel appears to me to mark the culmination of her genius. So far, it is one of the rare books which it is difficult to praise in adequate language. We may naturally suspect that part of the singular vividness is due to some admixture of an autobiographical element. The sonnets called *Brother and Sister*—perhaps her most successful poetical effort—suggest that the adven-

tures of Tom and Maggie had some counterpart in personal experience. In any case, the whole account of Maggie's childhood, the admirable pathos of the childish yearnings, and the quaint chorus of uncles and aunts, the adventure with the gipsies, the wanderings by the Floss, the visit to Tom in his school, have a freshness and brilliance of colouring showing that the workmanship is as perfect as the sentiment is tender. But when Maggie ceases to be the most fascinating child in fiction, and becomes the heroine of a novel, the falling off is grievous. The unlucky affair with Stephen Guest is simply indefensible. It may, indeed, be urged—and urged with plausibility—that it is true to nature; it is true, that is, that women of genius—and, indeed, other women—do not always show that taste in the selection of lovers which commends itself to the masculine mind. There is nothing contrary to experience in the supposition that the imagination of an impulsive girl may transfigure a very second-rate young tradesman into a lover worthy of her; but this does not excuse the author for sharing the illusion. It is painfully true that some women, otherwise excellent, may be tempted, like Janet Dempster, to take to stimulants. But we should not have been satisfied if her weakness had been represented as a creditable or venial peculiarity, or without a sense of the degradation. So it would, in any case, be hardly pleasant to make our charming Maggie the means of illustrating the doctrine that a woman of high qualities may throw herself away upon a low creature; but when she is made to act in this way, and the weakness is not duly emphasised, we are forced to suppose that George Eliot did not see what a poor creature she has really drawn. Perhaps this is characteristic of a certain feminine incapacity for drawing really masculine heroes, which is exemplified, not quite so disagreeably, in the case of Dorothea and Ladislav. But it is a misfortune, and all the more so because the error seems to be gratuitous. If it was necessary to introduce a new lover, he should have been endowed with some qualities likely to attract Maggie's higher nature, instead of betraying his second-rate dandyism in every feature. But the engagement to Philip Wakem, who is at least a lovable character, might surely have supplied enough tragical motive for a catastrophe which would not degrade poor Maggie to common clay. As it is, what promises to be the most perfect story of its kind ends most pathetically indeed, but yet with a strain which jars most painfully upon the general harmony.

The line so sharply drawn in the *Mill on the Floss* is also the boundary between two provinces of the whole region. With Maggie's visit to St. Ogg's, we take leave of that part of George Eliot's work which can be praised without important qualification—of work so admirable in its kind that we have a sense of complete achievement. In the later stories we come upon debatable ground: we have to recognise distinct failure in hitting the mark, and to strike a balance between the good and bad qualities, instead of simply recognising the thorough harmony of a finished whole. What is the nature of the change? The shortcomings are, as I

have said, obvious enough. We have, for example, the growing tendency to substitute elaborate analysis for direct presentation ; there are such passages, as one to which I have referred, where we are told that it is necessary to understand Deronda's character at five-and-twenty in order to appreciate the effect of after-events ; and where we have an elaborate discussion which would be perfectly admissible in the discussion of some historical character, but which, in a writer who has the privilege of creating history, strikes us as an evasion of a difficulty. When we are limited to certain facts, we are forced to theorise as to the qualities which they indicate. Real people do not always get into situations which speak for themselves. But when we can make such facts as will reveal character, we have no right to give the abstract theory for the concrete embodiment. We perceive when this is done that the reflective faculties have been growing at the expense of the imagination, and that, instead of simply enriching and extending the field of interest, they are coming into the foreground and usurping functions for which they are unfitted. The fault is palpable in *Romola*. The remarkable power not only of many passages but of the general conception of the book is unable to blind us to the fact that, after all, it is a magnificent piece of cram. The masses of information have not been fused by a glowing imagination. The fuel has put out the fire. If we fail to perceive this in the more serious passages, it is painfully evident in those which are meant to be humorous or playful. People often impose upon themselves when they are listening to solemn rhetoric, perhaps because, when we have got into a reverential frame of mind, our critical instincts are in abeyance. But it is not so easy to simulate amusement. And if anybody, with the mimicry of Mrs. Poyser or Bob Jakin in his mind, can get through the chapter called "A Florentine Joke" without coming to the conclusion that the jokes of that period were oppressive and wearisome ghosts of the facetious, he must be one of those people who take in jokes by the same faculty as scientific theorems. If we are indulgent, it must be on the ground that the historical novel proper is after all an elaborate blunder. It is really analogous to, and shows the weakness of, the various attempts at the revival of extinct phases of art with which we have been overpowered in these days. It almost inevitably falls into Scylla or Charybdis ; it is either a heavy mass of information striving to be lively, or it is really lively at the price of being thoroughly shallow, and giving us the merely pretty and picturesque in place of the really impressive. If any one has succeeded in avoiding the horns of this dilemma, it is certainly not George Eliot. She had certainly very imposing authorities on her side ; but I imagine that *Romola* gives unqualified satisfaction only to people who hold that academical correctness of design can supply the place of vivid directness of intuitive vision.

Yet the situation was not so much the cause as the symptom of a change. When George Eliot returned to her proper ground, she did not regain the old magic. *Middlemarch* is undoubtedly a powerful

book, but to many readers it is a rather painful book, and it can hardly be called a charming book to any one. The light of common day has most unmistakably superseded the indescribable glow which illuminated the earlier writings.

The change, so far as we need consider it, is sufficiently indicated by one circumstance. The "prelude" invites us to remember Saint Theresa. Her passionate nature, we are told, demanded a consecration of life to some object of unselfish devotion. She found it in the reform of a religious order. But there are many modern Theresas who, with equally noble aspirations, can find no worthy object for their energies. They have found "no coherent social faith and order," no sufficient guidance for their ardent souls. And thus we have now and then a Saint Theresa, "foundress of nothing, whose loving heart-beats and sobs after an unattained goodness tremble off and are dispersed among hindrances instead of centering in some long recognisable deed." This, then, is the keynote of *Middlemarch*. We are to have one more variation on the theme already treated in various form; and Dorothea Brooke is to be the Saint Theresa with lofty aspirations to pass through a searching ordeal, and, if she fails in outward results, yet to win additional nobility from failure. And yet, if this be the design, it almost seems as if the book were intended for elaborate irony. Dorothea starts with some admirable, though not very novel, aspirations of the social kind, with a desire to improve drainage and provide better cottages for the poor. She meets a consummate pedant, who is pitilessly ridiculed for his petty and hidebound intellect, and immediately takes him to be her hero and guide to lofty endeavour. She fancies, as we are told, that her spiritual difficulties will be solved by the help of a little Latin and Greek. "Perhaps even Hebrew might be necessary—at least the alphabet and a few roots—in order to arrive at the core of things and judge soundly on the social duties of the Christian." She marries Mr. Casaubon, and of course is speedily undeceived. But, curiously enough, the process of enlightenment seems to be very partial. Her faith in her husband receives its death-blow as soon as she finds out—not that he is a wretched pedant, but that he is a pedant of the wrong kind. Will Ladislaw points out to her that Mr. Casaubon is throwing away his labour because he does not know German, and is therefore only abreast of poor old Jacob Bryant in the last century, instead of being a worthy contemporary of Prof. Max Müller. Surely Dorothea's error is almost as deep as ever. Casaubon is a wretched being because he has neither heart nor brains—not because his reading has been confined to the wrong set of books. Surely a man may be a prig and a pedant, though he is familiar with the very last researches of German professors. The latest theories about comparative mythology may be familiar to a man with a soul comparable only to a dry pea in a bladder. If Casaubon had been all that Dorothea fancied, if his knowledge had been thoroughly up to the mark, we should still have pitied her for her not knowing the differ-

ence between a man and a stick. Unluckily, she never seems to find out that in this stupendous blunder, and not in the pardonable ignorance as to the true value of his literary labours, is the real source of her misfortune. In fact, she hardly seems to grow wiser even at the end; for when poor Casaubon is as dead as his writings, she takes up with a young gentleman, who appears to have some good feeling, but is conspicuously unworthy of the affections of a Saint Theresa. Had *Middlemarch* been intended for a cutting satire upon the aspirations of young ladies, who wish to learn Latin and Greek, when they ought to be nursing babies and supporting hospitals, these developments of affairs would have been in perfect congruity with the design. As it is, we are left with the feeling that aspirations of this kind scarcely deserve a better fate than they meet, and that Dorothea was all the better for getting the romantic aspirations out of her head. Have not the commonplace people the best of the argument?

It would be very untrue to say that the later books show any defect of general power. I do not think, for example, that there are many passages in modern fiction so vigorous as the description of poor Lydgate, whose higher aspirations are dashed with a comparatively vulgar desire for worldly success, gradually engulfed by the selfish persistence of his wife, like a swimmer sucked down by an octopus. On the contrary, the picture is so forcible and so lifelike that one reads it with a sense of actual bitterness. And as in *Daniel Deronda*, though I am ready to confess that Mordecai and Daniel are to my mind intolerable bores, I hold the story of Grandecourt and Gwendolen to be, though not a pleasant, a singularly powerful study of the somewhat repulsive kind. And it may certainly be said both of *Romola* and of *Middlemarch*, that they have some merits of so high an order that the defects upon which I have dwelt are felt as blemishes, not as fatal errors. If there is some misunderstanding of the limits of her own powers, or some misconception of true artistic conditions, nobody can read them without the sense of having been in contact with a comprehensive and vigorous intellect, with high feeling and keen powers of observation. Only one cannot help regretting the loss of that early charm. In reading *Adam Bede*, we feel first the magic, and afterwards we recognise the power which it implies. But in *Middlemarch* we feel the power, but we ask in vain for the charm. Some such change passes over any great mind which goes through a genuine process of development. It is not surprising that the reflective powers should become more predominant in later years; that reasoning should to some extent take the place of intuitive perception; and that experience of life should give a sterner and sadder tone to the implied criticism of human nature. We are prepared to find less spontaneity, less freshness of interest in the little incidents of life, and we are not surprised that a mind so reflective and richly stored should try to get beyond the charmed circle of its early successes, and to give us a picture of wider and less picturesque aspects of human life.

But this does not seem to account sufficiently for the presence of something jarring and depressing in the later work.

Without going into the question fully, one thing may be said: the modern Theresa, whether she is called Dorothea, or Maggie, or Dinah, or Janet, is the central figure in the world of George Eliot's imagination. We are to be brought to sympathise with the noble aspirations of a loving and unselfish spirit, conscious that it cannot receive any full satisfaction within the commonplace conditions of this prosaic world. How women are to find a worthier sphere of action than the mere suckling of babes and chronicle of small beer is a question for the Social Science Associations. Some people answer it by proposing to give women votes or degrees, and others would tell us that such problems can only be answered by reverting to Saint Theresa's method. The solution in terms of actual conduct lies beyond the proper province of the novelist. She has done all that she can do if she has revealed the intrinsic beauty of such a character, and its proper function in life. She should make us fall in love with Romola and Maggie, and convert us to the belief that they are the true salt of the earth.

Up to a certain point her success is complete, and it is won by high moral feeling and quick sympathy with true nobility of character. We pay willing homage to these pure and lofty feminine types, and we may get some measure of the success by comparing them with other dissatisfied heroines whose aspirations are by no means so lofty or so compatible with delicate moral sentiment. But the triumph has its limits. In the sweet old-world country life a Janet or a Dinah can find some sort of satisfaction from an evangelical preacher, or within the limits of the Methodist church. If the thoughts and ways of her circle are narrow, it is in harmony with itself, and we may feel its beauty without asking awkward questions. But as soon as Maggie has left her quiet fields and reached even such a centre of civilisation as St. Ogg's, there is a jar and a discord. *Romola* is in presence of a great spiritual disturbance where the highest aspirations are doomed to the saddest failure; and when we get to *Middlemarch* we feel that the charm has somehow vanished. Even in the early period, Mrs. Poyser's bright common-sense has some advantages over Dinah Morris's high-wrought sentiment. And in *Middlemarch* we feel more decidedly that high aspirations are doubtful qualifications; that the ambitious young devotee of science has to compound with the quarrelling world, and the brilliant young Dorothea to submit to a decided clipping of her wings. Is it worth while to have a lofty nature in such surroundings? The very bitterness with which the triumph of the lower characters is set forth seems to betray a kind of misgiving. And it is the presence of this feeling, as well as the absence of the old picturesque scenery, that gives a tone of melancholy to the later books. Some readers are disposed to sneer, and to look upon the heroes and heroines as male and female pigs, who are ridiculous if they persist and contemptible when they

fail. Others are disposed to infer that the philosophy which they represent is radically unsatisfactory. And some may say that, after all, the picture is true, however sad, and that, in all ages, people who try to lift their heads above the crowd must lay their account with martyrdom and be content to be uncomfortable. The moral, accepted by George Eliot herself, is indicated at the end of *Middlemarch*. A new Theresa, she tells us, will not have the old opportunity any more than a new Antigone would "spend heroic piety in daring all for the sake of a brother's funeral; the medium in which these ardent deeds took shape is for ever gone." There will be many Dorotheas, and some of them doomed to worse sacrifices than the Dorothea of *Middlemarch*, and we must be content to think that her influence spent itself through many invisible channels, but was not the less potent because unseen.

Perhaps that is not a very satisfactory conclusion. I cannot here ask why it should not have been more satisfactory. We must admit that there is something rather depressing in the thought of these anonymous Dorotheas feeling about vaguely for some worthy outlet of their energies, taking up with a man of science and discovering him to be an effete pedant, wishing ardently to reform the world, but quite unable to specify the steps to be taken, and condescending to put up with a very commonplace life in a vague hope that somehow or other they will do some good. Undoubtedly we must admit that, wherever the fault lies, our Therasas have some difficulty in fully manifesting their excellence. But with all their faults, we feel that they embody the imperfect influence of a nature so lofty in its sentiment, so wide in its sympathies, and so keen in its perceptions, that we may wait long before it will be adequately replaced. The imperfections belong in great measure to a time of vast revolutions in thought which produce artistic discords as well as philosophic anarchy. Lower minds escape the difficulty because they are lower; and even to be fully sensitive to the deepest searchings of heart of the time is to possess a high claim on our respect. At lowest, however we may differ from George Eliot's teaching on many points, we feel her to be one who, in the midst of great perplexities, has brought great intellectual powers to setting before us a lofty moral ideal, and, in spite of manifest shortcomings, has shown certain aspects of a vanishing social phase with a power and delicacy unsurpassed in her own sphere.

The Origin of London.

WALKING the other day down Fleet Street, while the griffin which marks the former site of Temple Bar was still a passing object of public curiosity, I stopped for a minute to have a good look at that poor, underfed, attenuated brute—so unpromising a representative of civic hospitality—and to take his bearings as the last relic of the material barriers that once separated the city of London from that outer ring which Mr. Freeman will not allow us to call the Metropolis. As I turned away from him westward, and pursued my course along the Embankment, my thoughts naturally reverted to the time when the City stood as a visible and distinct entity, surrounded by walls, and girt beyond them with fenny marshes and green fields; while the grey towers of the Abbey which I saw in the distance, half hidden by the modern overgrowth of the Parliament House, were still the centre of the separate village of Westminster, divided from the great town by the long stretch of swampy river bank which we even yet call the Strand. Looking back at that merchant republic of London, and forward to the royal and imperial borough, the capital of England—Westminster—the question forced itself upon me vividly, Why should there be any town here at all, and why should that town be the largest in the world? We are all so accustomed to take London for granted, that we hardly realise at first how extremely complex the question really is. That there should not be a London, or that it should not be just where it is and what it is, seems to us at the present day almost inconceivable. Yet there are a great many questions mixed up in the origin of London which it might be well worth our while to disentangle, and, if possible, to answer. Let us begin by dividing the problem into its two very distinct halves, and after that we may attempt the minor subdivisions separately.

First of all, there is the question, Why should there be a great town about the spot where the City now stands? And secondly, there is the question, Why should the capital of the United Kingdom and of the British Empire be at Westminster? These two questions are quite distinct; and the fact presupposed in the one is quite different from the fact presupposed in the other. Even if the political centre of the empire had happened to be at York or Edinburgh, at Winchester or Lichfield, there must have been a considerable commercial town about the point up to which the Thames continues to be navigable for ocean-going vessels; and even if there had been no great river in the neighbourhood of Westminster, a considerable administrative and fashionable town

must have grown up around the Court and the Houses of Parliament. As a matter of fact, the Metropolis consists of two great towns rolled into one, and each of them adding importance to the other : London, the largest seaport in the kingdom ; and Westminster, the political capital of the kingdom. But that they might easily have existed separately from one another we can see by going no further from home than to Edinburgh and Glasgow ; while we get the separation even more clearly accentuated in the case of New York and Washington.

Then, besides these greater questions, there are a number of minor questions mixed up with the present greatness of the Metropolis. Paris is the capital of a larger and a more populous State than London, yet it is not quite half the size. Of course it will be objected that Paris is not a seaport, but merely an administrative, legal, ecclesiastical, commercial, and literary centre. True, but Marseille is the greatest seaport of France, and Lyon the greatest manufacturing town of France ; yet Paris, Marseille, and Lyon, put together, do not make up two-thirds of London. Again, we may grant that there must have been a modern city where London now stands, even if there had never been one till late in the eighteenth century ; just as a great city necessarily grew up at Liverpool as soon as the cotton of America required a port of entry in the neighbourhood of the rich Lancashire and Yorkshire coal district, and as soon as a port of exit was required in return for the towns of Manchester, Blackburn, Wigan, Bolton, Burnley, Middleton, Oldham, Rochdale, Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Barnsley, and Sheffield, which sprang up above that very coal. But why was there a relatively important town of London in mediæval times, in early English times, and in Roman times ? Questions like this can only be answered by making a regular historical survey of the causes which led to the existence of London.

In new countries, we can easily guess why towns grow up in one place rather than another, because the causes which produced them are still in action. We see at once how such a harbour as that of New York necessarily attracts to itself almost all the import trade of America ; how Chicago, situated at the deepest bend of Lake Michigan, in the very centre of the finest corn-growing country of the world, naturally becomes the port of shipment for the surplus grain of that fertile level ; how Cincinnati was predestined to be the metropolis of pork ; and how New Orleans inevitably collects all the cotton of the Mississippi basin. So, too, a glance at the position of Montreal shows us that it must of necessity be the commercial capital of Canada ; and a first view of Melbourne sufficiently reveals why it is the one great town of Australia. But in older countries, the causes which led to the existence of cities are often more difficult to discover, because the circumstances have since changed so widely. It is not easy on the first blush to guess why Paris should have gathered around two muddy islets in the Seine, or why Rome arose upon two low hills which swell up slightly from the malarious levels of the

Campagna. A hasty mind might fancy that such towns were purely capricious or accidental in their origin. But, if we look the question fairly in the face, we cannot fail to see that definite reasons must always have induced men to aggregate around one spot rather than another. No town, no village, no single house even, ever arises without a sufficient cause pre-existing for its exact place and nature. Whenever a man takes up his abode anywhere, he does so because he finds life easier there than in any other accessible spot.

Apparently, the very first London was a Welsh village—an Ancient British village, the history books would say—which crowned the top of Ludgate Hill, near where St. Paul's now stands. The old Welsh, who owned Britain before the English took it, were a race half hunters, half cultivators, as Cæsar tell us. In his time, the Britons of the south-eastern country, which consists of open cultivable plains, were tillers of the soil; while those of the hilly north-west were still pastoral nomads, or savage hunters, dwelling in movable villages, and having mere empty forts on the hill-tops, to which the whole population retreated with their cattle in case of invasion. These *duns*, or hill-forts, still exist in numbers over all England, and are generally known as "British camps." Such names as Sinodun, Brendon, and Wimbledon still preserve their memory; while we are familiar with the Latinised form in Camalodunum, Moridunum, and Branodunum. Dunedin, Dunbar, Dundee, and Dunkeld, give us Scottish forms of like implication. *Down* and *dune* survive as modified modern words from the same root. As a rule, the syllables *dun* and *don* in place-names are sure indications of an old hill-fort. The "castles" or rude earthworks which crown almost every height among the South Downs and the western hills are the last remains of these old Welsh strongholds. Maiden Castle, near Dorchester, and the earthworks at Cissbury, Silchester, and Ogbury, are familiar instances.

Even before the Romans came, however, the river valleys of the south-east of Britain were inhabited by agricultural tribes, with fixed habitations and considerable towns. There are two great basins in England which have always possessed the highest agricultural importance: the one is that of the Thames, the other that of the Yorkshire Ouse. So long as England remained mainly an agricultural country, the two greatest cities of the land were the respective centres of these basins, London and York. And there has been more than one moment in our history when it might have seemed doubtful which was to become ultimately the capital of the whole kingdom.

Now, what made London the centre of the Thames valley? for that of course was the first step towards making it the metropolis of the British empire. Well, the Welsh tribe which inhabited the lower part of the valley must have originally needed a *dun* like all their neighbours. But there are not many conspicuous hills in the flat basin of the Thames between Richmond and the sea; and Ludgate Hill was perhaps the best that the Trinobantes of Middlesex could get. To be sure, it

could not compare with the *dun* at Edinburgh, at Dumbarton, or at Stirling; but it was high enough to make a natural fort, and it stood just above the point where the tide is distinctly felt. Thus, as the old Welsh became gradually more and more civilised, a regular town grew up around the low *dun*, and bore from the very first its modern name of London, for no name in England has altered so little with the wear and tear of centuries. It was not without natural advantages of situation; for a belt of marshes girt it round on every side, from the estuary of the Lea and the Finsbury flats to the Fleet river and London Fen, where the Strand now stretches. In the interval between Caius Cæsar's abortive attempt upon Britain, and the reduction of the south coast under Claudius, we know that a considerable trading town developed around the old village. Cunobelin, whose coins of Roman type are still found from Norwich and Chester to Kent, had his palace at the neighbouring station of Camalodunum; but London was the centre of such rude trade as yet existed. Trackways still traceable radiated thence all over the eastern counties and the south coast, where the traffic with Gaul was already important.

It is a great advantage to merchants and shippers to ascend a navigable river as far as possible into the centre of the country, because they have thus the largest circle of customers for their goods; and this is especially important in early stages of civilisation, when means of land transport are deficient. Accordingly we see that in early times a great town is to be found at the head of navigation of every great river. If we take the map of England, we shall notice that almost all the chief old county towns, such as Leicester, Gloucester, and York, are so situated. At a later date, we get almost direct seaports, like Glasgow, Liverpool, and Bristol; but in a primitive culture these ports would be far less useful, as well as less defensible, than those which stand on rivers running far inland, and so command a whole circle of country, instead of a mere semicircle, as is the case with coastwise towns. We must remember that railways have wholly revolutionised the carrying trade in this respect; but the importance of canals before the introduction of the railway system shows clearly how necessary was a good waterway for a commercial town. Now, the Thames is navigable for a further distance from the sea than any other river in England, and its valley, as we have already seen, is one of the most valuable agricultural districts. Here, then, we have the very conditions necessary for the rise of a commercial town; and even at this early period—as soon, in fact, as traffic with Gaul began at all—there must have been such a commercial town where London now stands. The site bears the same relation to the Thames that Montreal bears to the St. Lawrence. Moreover, the river points eastward towards the Continent; and this, though a slight disadvantage at the present day, when our trade lies mostly outward with America, India, China, and the colonies, was an advantage when trade lay wholly with Gaul and the south. Thus it happens that all throughout the Middle Ages our ports and commercial cities were all on the east and south

coast, or the rivers which flowed towards them; while at present Glasgow, Liverpool, and Bristol on the west are far more important than Hull, Sunderland, and Newcastle on the east.

For these reasons, therefore, even in the half savage realm of Cunobelin, London was the chief commercial town. We must not, however, think of it as a town in the modern sense: we must rather figure it to ourselves as a stockaded village of rude huts, with its central hill-fort, not much more civilised than the King Bonny's Town or King Long's town of Western Africa in our own time. The adventurous merchants from Gaul or further south who ascended the river to trade with the natives would get as far as London, where already (so Dio Cassius tells us) a primitive wooden London Bridge—doubtless a mere foot-rail for wayfarers—blocked their further passage up the unknown stream. Here they would traffic with the native dealers, who in turn would despatch the foreign manufactured goods of the great southern civilisation to every point of the compass along the rough trackways. We must see in it all a picture much like that of our own pioneers in the South Seas or Central Africa, taking the red cotton of Manchester or the glass beads of Venice, and receiving in return the raw products, ivory or palm oil, of the savage land. That, I take it, is how the city of London began to be.

When the Romans conquered Britain, the aspect of affairs changed a little. The conquerors turned the island into an agricultural exporting country, a subsidiary granary for the crowded southern cities which already devoured all the corn of Egypt and the Black Sea. So Britain was to Rome much what America is to modern England. And just as the most important wheat-growing parts of America consist of the St. Lawrence and northern Mississippi basin, so the most important wheat-growing parts of Roman Britain consisted of the valley of the Ouse and the valley of the Thames. But of these two the great plain of York, formed by the tributaries of the Ouse and draining into the Humber, is certainly the largest and most fruitful. Hence, for Roman purposes, York was the principal town of the island, and the Romans erected there their provincial capital of Eboracum. Even when two prefects were appointed, the southern usually had his station, not at Londinium, but at Verulamium, or St. Albans. London, however, must have largely increased in commercial importance none the less, though officially slighted; for as the trade with the Roman world grew larger, traffic must have come more and more to the mouth of the Thames. Indeed, the great number of well-known stations in the neighbourhood—Verulam, Camalodunum, Rhutupiæ, Dubris, and others—sufficiently shows that the Thames valley and the direct road to the Continent were of immense value. All the main Roman roads converged on London because the river could there be crossed; and these roads became the framework for the whole carrying system of England, till canals and railways revolutionised the highways of the country. The Roman remains occasionally

dug up in the City show that Londinium was a place of some pretensions. It was probably even then the largest town in Britain. Perhaps its population may already have amounted to as many as twelve or fifteen thousand souls.

We must pass rapidly, however, over these earlier stages of its history, and come on to the time when Britain changed its face and became known as England. The details of the English conquest and colonisation are so vague and mythical that we know absolutely nothing about the fate of London in the great revolution which handed over Britain from the Romanised and Christianised Welsh to the savage and heathen English pirates. The narrative of the Chronicle mentions the City but once, and that was when Hengst and Æsc—the Horse and his son the Ash-tree—fought with the Britons at Crayford; “the Britons then forsook Kent-land, and with mickle awe fled to Lunden-bury.” They would find themselves safe behind the walls of the Roman municipium. Of the actual conquest of the City we have no record at all; a loss for which we can console ourselves by the consideration that, even if we had one, it would be of no historical value whatsoever. The annals of the “Anglo-Saxons” before the arrival of Augustine are for the most part a mere fabulous tissue of heroic genealogies, distorted heathen legends, bad philology, and old myths fitted to new persons and places. But one fact we do know with certainty: that at some time or other a band of English pirates, belonging to the Saxon tribe, settled down around London, and that from their settlement the surrounding country has ever since borne the name of Middlesex.* We can even trace the actual clans or families which made themselves homesteads in the neighbouring lands. The Peadings settled at Paddington, the Kensingas at Kensington, the Billings at Billingsgate, the Ealings at Ealing, the Harlings at Harlington, the Islings at Islington, the Tædings at Teddington, the Wappings at Wapping, and the Nottings at Notting Hill. Just south of the river, too, on the Surrey shore, we find traces of the Kennings at Kennington and the Niwings at Newington. Thus the City is girt round on every side by obvious colonies of English pirates.

But did the English sack and burn “Lunden-bury” itself, and utterly massacre the Welsh inhabitants? For my part, I can never believe it. We have numberless bits of evidence which go to prove that the inhabitants of the Romanised towns made their peace with the English barbarians, and bought themselves off from the fate which overtook a few of the stubborn coastwise ports. The Welsh records are full of complaints against the Lloegrians of the towns who “became as Saxons.” The early English colonists, we know, were not a people of merchants; they were simply savage soldiers on the war-trail, who settled down

* Territorially, London itself was in Essex, though it was usually ruled by Mercia. Only the drainage of the estuary of the Lea (now the Isle of Dogs), which was made part of Middlesex, caused London to be surrounded by that doubtful county.

slowly after the conquest into farmers and landowners. They avoided the old towns, which always bear their original Celtic or Roman names, and are never called after English clans, like the modern villages now grown into great trading communities, such as Birmingham and Warrington. The Chronicle tells us expressly that "Ælle and Cissa beset Anderida, and offlew all that were therein, nor was there after one Briton left alive." But if tradition kept up the memory of the fate which befell this comparatively unimportant fortress, Pevensey—doubtless because it resisted the invaders too stoutly, trusting to its Roman walls—is it credible that it should have quite forgotten the sack of London, the largest and richest town in the whole country? In later days we know historically that the Londoners bought themselves off, time after time, from the Danish pirates; and they probably did the same with the earlier English pirates as well. It seems to me most likely that numbers of English settled in and around London; that a petty English king ruled over it; and that English soon became the ordinary language of the town: but I believe that many Romanised Welsh merchants still continued to live and trade there, that the urban mob passed quietly into the condition of English churls, and perhaps even that Christianity in a debased form lingered on among the inferior people till the arrival of Augustine. It is a significant fact that we never hear of the conversion of Middlesex. On the other hand, the Anglicised Welsh of London may well have become pagans to suit the taste of their conquerors, just as the Christians of southern Spain became Mohammedans under the Moors, while the Moors again became Christians under the Castilian kings. Language and religion tell us very little as to blood and race.

However all this may be, it is at least certain that London still remained the most important commercial town under the English, as it had been under the Romans. Yet it did not then bid fair to become the capital of the future consolidated kingdom. We have two English archbishops, whose titles and provinces date back to the earliest days of Christianity among the English, and they have their cathedrals at York and Canterbury respectively. But there has never been an archbishop of London. Why is this? Well, Canterbury was the capital of Æthelberht of Kent, the overlord of the whole south, and the first Christian English king; and Augustine himself bore the title. York was the capital of Eadwine of Northumbria, the overlord of the whole north; and Paulinus was the first archbishop. But London was not yet the capital of a large kingdom at all; it lay, like a sort of Berwick-upon-Tweed, in the debatable ground between Kent, Surrey, Essex, and Wessex. Hence, like the other minor kingdoms, it had only a bishop, who was originally the bishop of a people; not an archbishop, who was originally set beside the central overlord, as chief bishop of the whole community. When England slowly consolidated into the three main divisions which still subsist so markedly, Northumbria, Mercia, and Wessex—the North, the Midlands, and the

South—King Offa of Mercia set up his own archbishop at Lichfield; but Mercia was a short-lived power, and the South opposed the innovation; so only the two older titles and provinces have survived to our own day.

And what made London the final capital of Wessex? For Wessex had at first more than one capital, its kings living sometimes at Dorchester on the Thames (near Oxford), and sometimes at Winchester, the old Roman town which commanded the rich valleys of the Itchin and the Test. We must remember that royal towns are more apparently capricious than commercial centres. Wherever a king chooses to reside, he can gather his administrative bodies around him; but trade will only go where trade pays. Louis XIV. could make or unmake a Versailles; but he could not make or unmake a Havre or a Lyon. Yet great towns have often grown up around mere king-made centres, because their situation was at least as good as any other. Paris itself largely owes its existence to the fact that its counts became by slow degrees kings of all France. Berlin owes still more to the luck and the perseverance of the Hohenzollerns. St. Petersburg exists mainly because Peter willed it. Yet all these towns have also advantages of their own. Laon could never have been what Paris is: Moscow, isolated in the midst of a boundless plain, could never have become like St. Petersburg on its navigable river. The ridiculous failure of Washington shows one that a mere administrative centre will not of itself attract population, unless there are commercial advantages in its very situation. Still, the royal initiative counts for much; and London would never have been all that it actually is if Northumbria or Mercia had become the leading State in England, instead of Wessex. In either of those cases, we might have had an administrative capital at York or Lichfield, and a commercial capital at London. Our Edinburgh and our Glasgow might have been separated, as they now are in Scotland. Indeed, in early English days, Northumbria still retained the same position of supremacy as in Roman times, and for the same reason—because the plain of Humber is the most important agricultural tract in Britain. York was then the real capital of England; and even as late as the reign of Charles I. it remained the second city in the kingdom. That was why members of the royal family so often bore the title of Duke of York.

The Danish invasions, however, made the house of Wessex the representative English dynasty; and London became slowly the capital of Wessex. The north was left hopelessly behind; and the capital of Wessex became in turn the capital of England. Not that it was ever acknowledged suddenly as such, or that a capital in our modern sense was possible at all. The king kept court now at one place, now at another. The Witena-gemot, and afterwards the Parliament, met sometimes at Oxford, sometimes at London. Winchester remained the royal minster and residence till Edward the Confessor built Westminster. Even after the Conquest, William of Normandy still wore his crown

"on Eastertide at Winchester, on Pentecost at Westminster, and on Midwinter at Gloucester." But from the days of Alfred onward, we can see that London becomes more and more the real centre of English life, and the administrative capital of the kingdom. Though royal personages were buried at Winchester, they lived in London. During the Danish wars, the great town grew more and more important, both in a military and commercial sense; and it became ever more necessary that national councils should be held there. Under Canute, London had become pretty certainly the real capital. From year to year, as we read the English Chronicle, we can note that the City was growing constantly in size and political power. Long before the Norman Conquest, it was evidently by far the most important town in England. Its walls enclosed a considerable area; and on the Surrey side its suburb of Southwark—the southern work or defence—already formed a large centre around the *tête du pont*. The space within the street called London Wall marks the boundary of the old City.

Edward the Confessor, however, put the final stamp of royalty upon London by building his "new minster" on Thorney Island, near Westminster. Before his day, all English kings had been buried at Winchester. Edward himself was buried in his new Abbey, and so have been almost all his successors, except those early Normans and Angevins who preferred their own ancestral resting-places at Caen and Fontevraud. The Confessor's Abbey and William Rufus's palace made Westminster the real royal borough, much as Windsor became under the later Plantagenets. Of course the new quarter on Thorney Island was still a separate village, divided from London by the Strand; but the proximity of the City increased the importance of both. Winchester, however, even now retains one mark of its former royal connection. There are only three English bishops who take precedence of their brethren apart from seniority of appointment: and those three are, the Bishop of London, the new capital; the Bishop of Winchester, the old capital; and the former Prince-Bishop of Durham, the County Palatine, which formed the mark against the Scots, and where alone, as at Sion and so many other Swiss or German towns, the fortified episcopal palace castle still rises opposite the great cathedral.

The Norman Conquest itself marks another critical epoch in the history of London. For that conquest really decided the whole future relations of England with the Continent. From the days of Swegen and Canute, Britain had been, more or less, a mere dependency of Scandinavia and Denmark. Even during the reign of Edward the Confessor, it had looked northward as much as southward; for though the king himself was thoroughly Norman at heart, and filled the highest offices with Normans whenever he was able, Godwin and his sons were Danish rather than English in sentiment and interests; and the revolution which restored them to power and finally placed Harold on the throne, was at bottom the revival of a Danish party. In fact, the only real

question at the time of the Conquest was this—whether England should be ruled by Scandinavians from the north or by Scandinavians from the south: by Harold of Norway or by William of Normandy. If Harold the Norwegian had conquered at Stamford Bridge, England would have been thrown into a great northern confederacy, and its natural capital would have been York, the Danish head-quarters, with its Humber mouth pointing straight towards the Scandinavian north. But the victory of the English Harold over the Norse Harold paved the way quietly for William, and William's success drew England for a hundred years into close connection with the Romance civilisation of the opposite continent. Thus the north sank utterly in importance; Northumberland was turned into a waste, as a mark or boundary against the Scots; York became a mere provincial town, and London, Winchester, Canterbury, and the Cinque Ports remained steadily the centres of English administrative or commercial life. Lanfranc brought the Church into closer relation with Rome; while the Norman and Angevin kings, and the nobility whom they introduced, brought the whole country into closer relation with France and Flanders. Even when the Plantagenets had settled down into a thoroughly English dynasty, the effect of the new turn given to English life was still obvious. The trade encouraged by Edward I. was trade in wool with the Flemish cities, and trade in silk and wine with Paris and Bordeaux. The campaigns of Edward III. and Henry V. all turned towards the Seine and the Garonne. In short, by the Norman Conquest, England was wholly dis severed from her old connection with the Scandinavian barbarism, and made a member of the Romance civilisation. And this change firmly established London as the natural commercial centre of the island all through the Middle Ages.

There is reason to believe that the population of England increased but very slowly in the interval between the Conquest and the Reformation. Though a little foreign trade sprang up under Edward I. and grew largely under the Yorkist kings, yet the country remained, as a whole, agricultural in habits, and so the people increased at a very slow rate. Nevertheless, London evidently grew far faster than in proportion to the growth elsewhere; for trade was naturally concentrated upon it, and the administrative needs of the settled Plantagenet kingdom were relatively far greater than those of the rude Saxon realm. As of old, all the roads radiated from London, for the start given it by the Romans always made it the most convenient distributing centre in England. Yet all through the Middle Ages we may safely say that no fresh causes affected its growth. The accretion was but the natural development of its existing advantages. The reign of Elizabeth first introduced any new factors into the calculation. These new factors depended upon the westward movement. The discovery of America and of the new route to India by the Cape of Good Hope was revolutionising the commerce and the civilisation of the world. Up to the sixteenth century, the Mediterranean was still the centre of culture and traffic for all Chris-

tendom. The seventeenth century turned the course of both away from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic. The importance which had once belonged to Rome, Florence, Venice, and Genoa, became transferred at once to Paris and London, and finally also to Liverpool, Glasgow, New York, and Philadelphia. It was this great revolution which really made England—and, by implication, London also—what it is.

England stands in a singularly favourable position for commerce, as soon as navigation has extended to the wide seas. It is an island, joined by water to every other country of the earth, instead of being isolated, like Germany and Austria, by blocks of land shutting it out from the universal highway of the sea. It has navigable rivers and splendid harbours pointing north, south, east, and west. Oddly enough, it occupies, with exact precision, the very central point in the hemisphere of greatest land; so that it is actually nearer all seaports in the world, taken together, than any other spot can possibly be. And at the moment when navigation of the wide seas became practicable, when new routes were opened to America and to the East, it happened to occupy the nearest position to the centres of the old trade and manufacture on the one hand, and to the fresh *El Dorados* on the others. Thus England almost necessarily became the coloniser of America and the conqueror of India. The Elizabethan outburst was, in fact, the immediate result of this new direction given to English enterprise. Hitherto, English merchants had traded to Flanders and to Bordeaux, or, as a long voyage, to the Mediterranean. Now, our Raleighs, Frobishers, and Drakes began exploring the whole round world, and our Roes commenced the Indian connection at the court of Ajmere. A single generation stood between the Middle Ages and our own time. The England of Wolsey was almost mediæval; the England of Shakespeare, Raleigh, and Bacon was wholly modern. London began to grow rapidly from the very commencement of this new epoch, and it continued to grow uninterruptedly till the period of the next great change. One may trace the growth by the names of streets, from the Elizabethan Strand, through Restoration St. James's, to the Queen Anne district round Harley Street. By the time of Charles II., the difference in size between the capital and all the other towns of Britain seems to have been vastly greater than it had ever been before or since. In the early Middle Ages, York, Oxford, and Winchester were great towns not unworthy to be compared with the London of the same day; in our own time, Glasgow, Liverpool, and Manchester have some pretensions in size, even when compared with the Metropolis: but in the England of Charles II. London was first, and the rest were nowhere. There was as yet no reason why trade should seek any other main channel, and it still remained true to the old highways which radiated from the Thames. Without canals and railways, the great inland port was necessarily the best possible centre for commerce in the island.

The century which elapsed between 1750 and 1850, however, was

fraught with the deepest danger for the supremacy of London; and though, in spite of the peril, it has still grown on with alarming rapidity, and has doubled its population with ever-increasing frequency, it may yet be fairly said that the comparative increase is not so large as during the earlier period. I am aware that statistics distinctly point the other way; but, then, the statistics are wooden, and do not take into account all the real elements of the problem. For the fact is, that London, while gaining absolutely at an enormous rate, has been losing comparatively by the side of a new order of towns, which have come into being as the result of another vast revolution, almost as important as the Elizabethan. This revolution has been brought about by the employment of coal, first in the smelting and manufacture of steel and iron, and afterwards through the use of the steam-engine in every kind of industrial pursuit. Even before the age of steam, Bristol had become a great western port through the influence of the West India sugar trade. But steam was destined to change the traffic with the colonies and America from a mere reception of tobacco and cotton to a great reciprocal trade in raw materials on the one hand, and manufactured goods on the other. We were to become the clothiers and ironmongers of the world. Coal and America, put together, have turned England round on a pivot from east to west. She used to point eastward, by Thames and Humber, towards the Continent; she now points westward, by Mersey, Clyde, and Avon, towards America and Australia. The south used to be the trading and manufacturing half, while the north was a wild grazing and agricultural country. Now the north is the trading and manufacturing part, while the south is mostly a succession of quiet rural districts. The great coal regions all lie west or north. On the Scotch coal-field stand Glasgow, Paisley, and Greenock. On the Tyne collieries we find Newcastle, Shields, and Durham; while close at hand are Sunderland, Stockton, Darlington, Middlesbrough, and the Cleveland iron district. The Lancashire field encloses Manchester, Blackburn, Wigan, Bolton, St. Helens, Burnley, Middleton, Oldham, Rochdale, and Ashton. The cotton of America and the wool of Australia come to Liverpool, to be worked up either in this coal region or in that of the West Riding, which includes Leeds, Bradford, Wakefield, Barnsley, Sheffield, and Chesterfield. Nottingham and Derby hang upon its border, while Hull supplies it with an eastward outlet. On the midland coal-bed stand Wolverhampton, Dudley, Wednesbury, Walsall, and Birmingham. Other carboniferous deposits occur in the crowded South Wales region, around Swansea and Merthyr Tydvil, as well as near Bristol. The influence of all this northern and western development must clearly detract so much, comparatively, from the relative importance of London. To put it plainly, London was once the very focus of national thought and industry, surrounded on every side by the most flourishing parts of the country; it is now isolated in the midst of the agricultural south, while Manchester, Liverpool, Birmingham, Leeds, Sheffield, and Glasgow form totally distinct and often

antagonistic centres of political and industrial life in the north and the midlands. Without entering into the realm of politics, one may fairly say that the existence of a Manchester school or a Birmingham school has only been possible in the last fifty years, and has been rendered possible by this comparative isolation of the capital in the agricultural south. The position has largely divorced the feelings of London from the feelings of the industrial centres.

Nevertheless, London has survived, and has grown more rapidly than ever. Coal and steam, which seemed to threaten her supremacy, have really strengthened it. Had there been no such things as railways, it might have been otherwise. The importance of Glasgow and Liverpool would then have largely increased, because there only can raw material be brought home to the very door of the coal-employing manufacturer. But railways have annihilated space so far as a small island like Britain is concerned, and the Thames has thus retained its original importance as a great navigable river, even as against the severe competition of the Clyde and the Mersey. There can be no doubt at all that the two western rivers possess greater natural advantages for trade in its present stage than does the Thames. They run nearer into the very heart of the coal-bearing and manufacturing tracts, and they are thus the natural ports for entry of all heavy raw materials, and for exportation of all cottons, woollen goods, and hardware. But the Thames still lies nearest to the greatest centre of population, the administrative capital, and the town home of all the landed aristocracy and wealthy classes generally. Hence, possessing such a harbour as London, it still manages to attract the largest tonnage of any seaport in the kingdom. It is true, cotton, wool, and raw materials generally are mostly landed elsewhere; piece-goods, broadcloths, hardware, and machinery are mostly shipped elsewhere; but for articles of immediate consumption, such as tea, corn, meat, cheese, eggs, butter, sugar, wine, and spirits, or for articles of luxury, such as silks, velvets, carpets, gloves, drapery, furs, and French and German products generally, it is by far the most important port in the country. The railways all converge upon it, and so make it the centre for the entire wholesale distributing trade of Great Britain. Thus the vast increase of English population and the vast development of English industry during the present century have caused London to grow with enormous rapidity, in spite of the immense diversion of many great branches of trade to the western ports. Nevertheless, it must be remembered that the position of London is now to some extent artificial, depending largely upon the railways, and upon its already established greatness as an administrative centre and fashionable agglomeration of wealthy people. If there had been no old capital upon the Thames before the present century, it is doubtful whether the possession of its navigable river could have made London, under existing conditions, half as big as Glasgow actually is. Taking into consideration geographical position as regards the three kingdoms, and central site as regards trade,

it may be said that, if Britain had now for the first time to choose a capital, its choice would naturally fall upon Manchester.

And now, before closing this necessarily imperfect sketch, let us ask briefly, What are the main elements which go to make up the population of London at the present day? First of all, then, taking them in natural, historical, and geographical order, there is the seafaring and shipping element, which congregates mainly around the Docks, Wapping, and the Tower district. This element, though the West End now knows and thinks little about it, is [the one which gives rise to all the others. Then there is the great wholesale, commercial, importing, distributing, financial, stockbroking, and banking element which makes up the City. Next comes the legal and administrative class, which occupies the Temple, Lincoln's Inn, and Chancery Lane, runs down the Strand by Somerset House, spreads over the greater part of Whitehall, and culminates in the Parliament Houses and the neighbouring portion of Westminster. After that, we get the fashionable West End, from Mayfair and Belgravia to Kensington, Bayswater, and Notting Hill, with its retail shopping district around Regent Street and Oxford Street. Then comes the whole world of clerks and business *employés*, stretching in two great semicircles from Portland Town and Kentish Town to Islington and Dalston on the north; and again from Battersea and Clapham to Camberwell and Peckham on the south. Finally, there is the vast and unrecognised mass of artisans and working men, congregating chiefly in the east and south, but scattered up and down in slums and back quarters everywhere. Intermixed among these main divisions are many lesser ones, drawn naturally to London as the chief national centre: the worlds of literature, of journalism, of medicine, of art, of the theatre, of science, and, to some extent, of education; the cabmen, servants, and hangers-on of wealthy families; and a large industrial class engaged in the manufacture of such articles as can be easily produced in the absence of coal-fields—the last, especially, to be found on the south side and in the suburbs. Of course so brief a list must necessarily include only the main headings; but it is sufficient to show us that London really consists of two towns rolled inextricably into one—a commercial seaport on the one hand, and an administrative capital on the other. In virtue of the first we get the shipping, the City, the manufacturers, and the artisan class; in virtue of the second we get the Court, the Parliament, the West End, the retail shops, the official, legal, medical, literary, journalistic, artistic, and general professional society. And when we take into consideration all these things, side by side with the wide commerce, increasing population, and cosmopolitan interests of England, we see at once, I fancy, why London is bigger than Paris, or Berlin, or New York, or St. Petersburg.

Oxford Honours.

THE perusal of the old Oxford Class Lists is, at first, disappointing; so few of the names therein recorded seem ever to have reappeared in print. When, however, one reflects that the number of distinguished men is after all very small, one will soon perceive that the proportion of "firsts" who subsequently attained more than University fame is a very fair one. Nor should it be forgotten that the vast majority of firsts (if not cut off early in life) have, at least, led useful and prosperous careers; very few indeed have gone to the bad.

Examinations in honours were first instituted at Oxford in 1802, when *Maximè examinătoribus publicis se commendaverunt* Messrs. Abel D. Henty, of Oriel, and John Marriott, of Christ Church. In 1805 the term *Egregiè* was used as second to *Maximè*. In 1807 first appear *Classis I.* and *Classis II.* There were two schools, the classical and the mathematical; and the examinations henceforth took place twice a year, in Easter and Michaelmas terms. A mathematical "first" was not granted till 1808, when it was accorded to a single student, who also took a first in classics; his name was Robert Peel, of Christ Church. Whately took a double second at the same time. He was just a year older than Peel, who wanted about two months to complete his twenty-first year.

A double-first was not won again till 1810, when John Keble, of Corpus, obtained that honour. Like Whately he became a Fellow of Oriel. In 1811 one finds the late Nassau W. Senior in the first class.* Though he did nothing extraordinary in after-life, every one who has had the pleasure of reading his books will acknowledge him to have been an excellent specimen of Oxford culture, at once Liberal and Conservative. The single-first of Easter 1812 was given to John Taylor Coleridge, the late judge, and father of Lord Coleridge. He also won the Latin verse, the Latin and English essays, and a fellowship at Exeter. Poor Hartley Coleridge took a second (1818); Father Coleridge, s.j., a first (1844), and a fellowship at Oriel; Herbert Coleridge, a double-first (1852). The greatest of them all was at Cambridge—his college, Jesus—whence he ran away, being frightened of his debts, and enlisted in a cavalry regiment. After three months of misery, his friends found and bought him out.

* Where not otherwise specified, "first," or "first class," will be understood to mean a classical first—the Oxford honour *par excellence*.

In 1812 Thomas Vowler Short, afterwards Bishop of St. Asaph, took a double-first; Henry Hart Milman and John Gibson Lockhart, firsts. Renn Dickson Hampden, whom Lord John Russell took so much trouble to make into a bishop, won a double-first in 1813. The good Bishop of Hereford's best title to fame is that (according to some) he unconsciously sat to Mr. Trollope for a portrait of himself. Dr. Hampden is not exactly Dr. Proudie; but the two have several traits in common.

In 1814 Thomas Arnold, of Corpus, was placed in the first class. He, too, went to join the little band of Oriel Fellows, and to add to their lustre. Next year Charles Longley, of Christ Church, was placed in the first class. Eighteen years later, Archibald Campbell Tait, of Balliol, obtained identical honours; but in climbing to the summit of their profession Tait was only six years behind Longley. The latter was consecrated Primate in 1862; his present Grace of Canterbury succeeded him in 1868.

A notable second of 1817 is Ichabod C. Wright, the translator of Homer and Dante—author, too, of an unread pamphlet on *Evils of the Currency*. In 1817 Francis Baring, afterwards Lord Northbrook, took a double-first; his son, the first Lord of the Admiralty, only achieved a second (1846). Charles, the late Bishop of Durham, won a double-first in 1829. All three were at "the House." In 1818 Richard Bethell, of Wadham, took a first in classics and a third in mathematics. Besides the future Lord Westbury, two other Wadham men were placed in the first class. The present Lord Harrowby took a double-first in 1818. Lord Sandon graduated in 1852, but without seeking to emulate his father's honours; still, both have been Cabinet Ministers, which is perhaps of more importance. Lord Cottesloe secured but a third* in classics (1819), but was consoled by a mathematical first. A fellow-third of young Fremantle (but not fellow-first) was John Yarde Buller, who was to precede him by sixteen years to the House of Lords, having been created Lord Churston by the late Lord Derby in 1858. The class-list of Easter 1820 includes the names of Henry Labouchere (first), afterwards Lord Taunton, and Lord Francis Gower (second), afterwards first Earl of Ellesmere. That of Michaelmas contains those of Edward Berkeley Portman and John Henry Newman; the latter is in the third, the former in the first, class. Mr. Portman rendered valiant service to the Whig party; was made a baron by Lord Melbourne, and raised to a viscounty by Mr. Gladstone. But his proudest triumph was assuredly to have beaten Cardinal Newman in a fair field.

The lists of 1821 and 1828 contain the names of George Grey and George Cornewall Lewis. Both took firsts (to which Lewis added a mathematical second), and both rose to be statesmen of the first rank.

* Strictly speaking, a third class in honours was not instituted till 1825; but from 1809 till that date the practice was to divide the second class into two sections, which amounts to about the same thing.

Their names are here associated, because they were both Whigs of exactly the same sober type, which excites no enthusiasm, but commands profound confidence, and they were to be colleagues in more than one Cabinet. Lewis, however, was not only statesman but scholar, a title which one would only refuse to Sir George Grey as in comparison with him. The Hon. Robert Grosvenor, raised to the peerage in 1857 as Lord Ebury, took a third the same year that Grey won his first. In 1821, Wood, of Oriel (created Viscount Halifax in 1866), took a double-first, and Heathcote, of Christ Church—afterwards Sir William, and twenty years M.P. for the University—a first. Of the sitting members, Mr. Talbot took a second in classical moderations (1855), and a fourth in the final classical school, or “greats” (1857). Sir John Mowbray’s name is conspicuous by its absence from the lists. It may be added that the Chancellor himself (Lord Salisbury) contented himself with the modest distinction of a fourth in mathematics (1849); the High Steward, Lord Carnarvon, achieved a first (1852). Both of these noblemen became Cabinet Ministers together for the first time in 1866, the Marquis being but thirty-six and the Earl but thirty-five years of age. Both retired together, after a few months of office, being alarmed at the dimensions which Mr. Disraeli’s Reform Bill threatened to take.

The lists of Easter 1822 are marked by the names of Edward Bouverie Pusey (I.), and Sir Alexander Malet (the diplomatist), and Robert Vernon Smith, nephew of Sydney, afterwards first Lord Lyveden (II.). In Michaelmas 1822 Lord Shaftesbury was placed in the first class, as also the late Lord Carlisle, so successful as Viceroy of Ireland. At the same time the great Lord Rosse was placed in the first class in mathematics, as well as his brother, the Hon. John Parsons. Lord Rosse bore in those days the uncouth-sounding name of Viscount Oxmantown. The incident of two brothers winning firsts of the same kind at the same time must be almost unparalleled. In 1823, one Honoratus Smith signalised his name by taking a first. Possibly he was put on his mettle by such a prænomen; his godfathers and god-mothers may even have given it him with this idea.

In 1823 we begin to hear of the Wilberforces at Oxford. William had been at Cambridge. Robert took a double-first in 1823; Samuel a first in mathematics, and a second in classics in 1826; Henry a first in classics and a second in mathematics, besides the Ellerton and Denyer prizes. The present incumbent of the see of Oxford, who succeeded Dr. Wilberforce in 1869, took “a good second,” followed by a fellowship at Exeter, which he had the luck to be able to throw up within a few months for a living in the gift of the Clive family.

At the same time that Robert Wilberforce (an Oriel man, by the way, like his brother Samuel) was taking a double-first, Mr. C. R. M. Talbot (also of Oriel) obtained a first in mathematics. Mr. Corry, some time First Lord of the Admiralty in the third Derby administration, won a second in classics the same term; and Edmund (Lord) Hammond

a third. Richard Hurrell Froude took a double-second in 1824; James Anthony a second in 1840. The latter also won the English essay and was elected a Fellow of Exeter. In 1826 Francis Newman was placed in the first class both in classics and mathematics. Three Fabers each obtained a second the same term. Frederick William was not amongst them: he was to achieve that honour ten years later, and also to win the English verse and a Johnson's theological scholarship. No less than seven of this name appear in the class lists previous to 1860, only one, however (Arthur), attaining to a first. A few other notable names are those of Archdeacon Denison (I. 1826), Herman Merivale and Charles Neate (I. 1827), Bonamy Price (double-first, 1829), and Charles Wordsworth, now Bishop of St. Andrews (I. 1830). His brother, now Bishop of Lincoln, took high honours at Cambridge the same year, and was elected to a fellowship at Trinity. Their famous uncle was a Cambridge man and a Johnian. Sir Travers Twiss obtained a first in mathematics and a second in classics the same term as Charles Wordsworth. At Michaelmas of the same year the first class contained the names, *inter alios*, of Henry Edward Manning and Walker Kerr Hamilton, the late Bishop of Salisbury, who rebuked S. G. O. for the excessive lowness of his Churchmanship. The position of Dr. Hamilton and Dr. Wilberforce in respect of the question of vestments was thus summed up by *Punch* some dozen years ago:—

Says Sarum to Oxon,

"I shall put these togs on:"

Says Oxon to Sarum,

"I should like to wear 'em."

With Manning and Hamilton, as well as in the first class in mathematics, was placed Joseph Anstice, the pride of Christchurch—one might almost say her Marcellus. Those who have not read his translations of Euripides will do well to procure them without delay. Sir Thomas Acland closed his collegiate life with a double-first in 1831. A brother-first was Thomas Legh Claughton, destined to be first Bishop of the restored see of St. Albans. The lists for Michaelmas 1831 are especially interesting. They include two double-firsts, W. E. Gladstone and Henry Denison, both Housemen; two notable seconds, Frederick Denison Maurice and Robert Phillimore (Sir Robert); and a notable fourth, Sidney Herbert. "Fourths" were first given this year. The actual Cabinet consists of six Oxford, five Cambridge men, and three gentlemen not educated at any University, viz. Mr. Bright, Mr. Forster, and Mr. Chamberlain. The Oxford men have all taken honours, except Lord Granville; the Prime Minister leading the way, as becomes him; Lords Selborne and Kimberley and Mr. Dodson having won firsts, and Lord Northbrook, as before stated, a second. The Cambridge men are Lord Spencer, the Duke of Argyll, Lord Hartington, Sir William Harcourt, and Mr. Childers; the last two alone troubled themselves with honours. The late Cabinet could boast a far smaller number of academical distinctions.

Of the six Oxford men in it, only two, Sir Stafford Northcote and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, were first-class men; Lord Cranbrook had taken a second, the Duke of Richmond and Lord Sandon were passmen. The Premier had never been to a University, neither had Colonel Stanley nor Mr. Smith. The Chancellor had taken a first in classics and other honours at Trinity College, Dublin. The remaining three, the Duke of Richmond, Sir Richard Cross, and Lord John Manners, had been educated at Cambridge, but waited to win their laurels in the bigger world.

To resume the record of the years: another brilliant list is that of Easter 1833. Among the names inscribed in the first class are those of the Hon. Charles Canning, Viceroy of India during the Mutiny; John Jackson, now Bishop of London; Henry Liddell (a double-first), now Dean of Christ Church; Robert Lowe, and Robert Scott, now Dean of Rochester, and compiler with Dean Liddell of the excellent Greek lexicon which bears their joint names. The wretched Robert Montgomery, already author of *Satan* and *The Omnipresence of the Deity*, was honoured with a fourth at the same time. He was then twenty-six, and had matriculated at Oxford (with a view to Holy Orders) in the very year of Macaulay's pitiless essay. No other freshman has probably ever come up to the University thus "damn'd to everlasting fame." Mr. J. A. Trollope figures as a fourth in '34; Mr. Charles Reade as a third in '35. Mr. Reade fortunately lived in the days of close fellowships, and managed to secure one at his own college of Magdalen; he holds it still. *A propos* of men of letters, it may be noted that Mr. Ruskin (a gentle-commoner of Christchurch) took a double-fourth (1842), having previously won the prize for English verse. Mr. Matthew Arnold also won the English verse, a second in classics, and a fellowship at Oriel. Edwin Arnold won the English verse in '52. Ten Arnolds in all carried off honours previously to 1860, dividing six firsts among them. Mr. Swinburne took a second in moderations, 1858, being elected Taylorian scholar (for proficiency in French and Italian) the same year.

In Michaelmas 1834 there occurs the name of the Hon. Frederick Bruce in the second class. This gentleman terminated an honourable and useful public career as Minister at Washington in 1867. But the Universities are ill represented in the diplomatic service, for the simple reason that men enter the profession too young to have time for a residence at Oxford or Cambridge. Of the six actual "ambassadors," properly so called, only two have been at a University: both Lord Lyons and Lord Dufferin are Christchurch men. The former obtained a fourth, the latter went down without taking a degree.

Among other distinguished firsts still living may be cited Lord Cardwell (a double), Mr. Jowett, Dr. Goulburn (Dean of Norwich), Professor Rawlinson, the Deans of Westminster and St. Paul's, Bishop Piers Claughton, Sir Francis Doyle, Mr. Richard Congreve, the Bishop of Exeter, Lord Blachford (a double), Sir Joseph Arnould, Professor

Mountague Bernard, the Rev. E. H. Plumptre (a double), Lord Carlingford, Mr. Goldwin Smith, Professor Thorold Rogers, Mr. T. Walrond, Mr. W. G. Palgrave and Mr. F. T. Palgrave, Canon Bright, the Rev. G. W. Kitchin (a double), the Bishop of Gibraltar (Dr. Sandford), Messrs. Frederic Harrison, Goschen, G. C. Brodrick, Montague Cookson, Lord Colchester (a double), Mr. Justice Bowen, Canon Duckworth, Messrs. Albert Dicey, L. A. Tollemache, and Butler-Johnstone and the Bishop of Salisbury (Dr. Moberley), Mr. Bryce (a double), Mr. Lyulph Stanley, Lords Camperdown and Morley.

Among eminent seconds are Dr. Mark Pattison (Rector of Lincoln), Sir Benjamin Brodie (mathematical), Sir George Dasent, Mr. Freeman, Dr. Hayman (a double), the Dean of Chichester, Mr. Richard D. Blackmore, Mr. Mackonochie, Sir Alexander Grant, Mr. Morier (Minister at Lisbon), Canon Liddon, Mr. Grant Duff, Mr. Arthur Peel, and Professor Beesly, Mr. W. H. Gladstone, Mr. Walter H. Pater, and the Rev. Stephen Gladstone.

A few thirds who have been heard of may be added, *e.g.*, Sir Adolphus Liddell, the Archbishop of York, and the Rev. C. L. Dodgson (Lewis Carroll). Likewise some fourths, as Canon Trevor, Professor Monier Williams (a double), Sir Hardinge Giffard, the Bishop of Rochester (mathematics), the Rev. R. Temple West, and Sir W. T. Charley.

In 1853 the number of schools was raised to four by the addition of one of law and modern history, and one of natural science. Sir Michael Hicks-Beach's first was won in the former school (1858). One of his examiners was Mr. Freeman, who in later years was so vehemently to denounce the administration of which Sir Michael was a member. Mr. Freeman was one of the most clement of examiners; perhaps the very consciousness of his own strength made him considerate towards the lads who stood before him. The late Lord Stanhope once examined in this school. Lord Colchester has twice accepted the office; he is a double first—classics and history. The same degree was taken by another well-known Tory politician, Professor and Captain Montagu Burrows, who prefers erring with Paley on the subject of bribery to being right with our modern purists. Talking of examiners, it is amusing to think of some of those on whom Keble sat in judgment. Among them were Lord Shaftesbury, Lord Rowe, and Lord Halifax; but also Sir William Heathcote and Dr. Pusey. From 1831 to 1842 Keble was Professor of Poetry, in which capacity he was annually called on (in conjunction with the Vice-Chancellor, the Proctors, and the Public Orator) to give an opinion as to the merits of the compositions sent in for the Newdigate, or English Verse, Prize. In 1837 it was won by Arthur Stanley, who, according to custom, went to the Professor of Poetry to revise his poem for recital in the Theatre. The Dean of Westminster relates how he had introduced a half-line of Tennyson's among his own verses, duly marking it with inverted commas. Keble was struck with Tennyson's expression, but ignorant whence it came. "Shakespeare?" he ob-

served inquiringly. The Laureate may well have forgiven the neglect of his works for the sake of such a compliment from an exquisite judge of poetry and an excellent poet. The winners of the Newdigate number several other youths the writings of whose manhood are read, *e.g.* Bishop Heber, Dean Milman, T. W. Faber, Ruskin, J. C. Shairp, Matthew Arnold, P. S. Worsley, John Addington Symonds, and W. T. Courthope. The prize was carried off in 1821 by the late Earl of Carlisle, in 1832 by Lord Selborne, in 1835 by Sir Seymour Fitzgerald, sometime Governor of Bombay, in 1846 by Mr. Osborne Morgan.

The Chancellor gives every year three prizes, each of 20*l.*, for the best compositions in Latin verse and prose and English prose respectively. Amongst the winners of the Latin verse may be pointed out William Jackson (1770), who afterwards became Bishop of Oxford, and made that title as familiar to society as it was in the days of Wilberforce; Charles Abbot (1777), subsequently Speaker of the House of Commons and Lord Colchester; William Wyndham Grenville (1779), when the subject was "*Vis Electrica*," a fearfully difficult one for treatment in Augustan Latin; Richard Viscount, afterwards Marquis, Wellesley (1780); Charles Abbott, the first Lord Tenterden and Chief Justice of England (1784), who had to deal with another trying subject, *viz.* "*Globus Aerostaticus*"; George Canning (1789); Edward Copleston, the Bishop of Llandaff and friend of Whately (1793); Reginald Heber (1801); John Taylor Coleridge (1810); H. H. Milman (1813); Hon. Edward Stanley (the late Lord Derby)—subject, "*Syracuse*" (1819); Hon. George Howard (Lord Carlisle)—subject, "*Eleusis*" (1821); Charles Wordsworth (1827); T. L. Claughton (1828); Roundell Palmer (1831); Goldwin Smith (1845); John Conington (1847).

The English essay has been won by the great Lord Eldon—subject, "*On the Advantages and Disadvantages of Travelling into Foreign Countries*" (1771); Henry Addington, afterwards Premier and Viscount Sidmouth—subject, "*On the Affinity between Painting and Writing in point of Composition*" (1779); Lord Tenterden, "*On the Use and Abuse of Satire*," a subject with which he was pretty often called upon to deal in after-years at Westminster (1786); Henry Phillpotts, the fighting Bishop of Exeter—subject, "*On the Influence of a Religious Principle*" (1795); Edward Copleston, "*On Agriculture*" (1796); R. Heber, "*A Sense of Honour*" (1805); Richard Whately, "*In what Arts have the Moderns been less successful than the Ancients?*" (1810); John Keble, "*On Translation from Dead Languages*" (1812). Other winners have been the late Mr. Justice Coleridge, Thomas Arnold, Dean Milman, Archdeacon Denison, Herman Merivale, Joseph Anstice, Bishop Piers Claughton, Dean Stanley—subject, "*Do States, like Individuals, inevitably tend, after a certain period of maturity, to decay?*" Mr. Froude, Lord Carlingford, Mr. Goldwin Smith, John Conington, Mr. Osborne Morgan, Mr. G. C. Brodrick, Mr. J. H. Green, and Mr. J. A. Symonds. It will be seen that the same names recur again and again in different

lists. The really clever lad is clever at everything. Among the winners of the Latin essay one finds Keble, J. T. Coleridge, Milman, R. D. Hampden, Arnold, Samuel Hinds (Bishop of Norwich), E. B. Pusey, G. A. Denison, C. Wordsworth, R. Palmer, A. P. Stanley, W. C. Lake (Dean of Durham), Jowett, Goldwin Smith, J. Conington, and James Bryce.

A word in conclusion as to certain honours which Oxford pays to mature age. To enumerate the honorary Doctors of Civil Law would require a volume; but a glance at the list of Chancellors is well worth testimony. To be Chancellor of the University is a distinction coveted by men loaded with all the honours that the State can confer. The first Chancellor believed to have been elected for life was John Russell, Bishop of Lincoln (1483-84). Cardinal Pole was Chancellor in Mary's reign, and Sir Christopher Hatton in Elizabeth's; from 1630-41 the office was held by Laud; and by Oliver and Richard Cromwell during their protectorates. Clarendon was Chancellor 1660-67, being succeeded by Gilbert Sheldon, Archbishop of Canterbury, the last ecclesiastic who has filled the post. He was succeeded in 1669 by James Butler, first Duke of Ormonde. Ormonde died in 1688, when the University was somewhat puzzled as to the choice of a person to replace him. Finally the duke's son and heir was elected, both for the affection borne to his father's name and also as a protest against the arbitrary measures of King James in respect of religion. Ormonde had been thoroughly loyal, but a staunch Protestant and no friend of tyranny. The University thus sought to represent itself in its Chancellor. The new Ormonde, however, was but a poor copy of the old. He ultimately got into correspondence with the Pretender, was impeached, and fled the kingdom (1715). Oxford, with touching fidelity, elected a third Butler, Charles, Earl of Arran, to be Chancellor. Lord North, the Duke of Portland (twice Premier), Lord Grenville, and the Duke of Wellington are other Chancellors of renown. Lord Grenville was chosen in 1809 after a contested election, his opponent being Lord Eldon. The fact that Lord Grenville's sister-in-law, the Marchioness of Buckingham, was a Roman Catholic, was freely made use of to disparage his candidature. In 1834, when Wellington accepted this high honour, his brother Lord Wellesley was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. Archbishop Whately, on hearing the news, straightway repaired to the castle and begged for the command of the forces. The Viceroy only half smiled at the joke.

Et tu in Arcadia Vixisti.

IN ancient tales, O friend, thy spirit dwelt;
 There, from of old, thy childhood passed; and there
 High expectation, high delights and deeds,
 Thy fluttering heart with hope and terror moved.
 And thou hast heard of yore the Blatant Beast,
 And Roland's horn, and that war-scattering shout
 Of all-unarmed Achilles, ægis-crowned.
 And perilous lands thou sawest, sounding shores
 And seas and forests drear, island and dale
 And mountain dark. For thou with Tristram rode
 Or Bedevere, in farthest Lyonesse.
 Thou hadst a booth in Samarcand, whereat
 Side-looking Magians trafficked; thence, by night,
 An Afreet snatched thee, and with wings upbore
 Beyond the Aral mount; or, hoping gain,
 Thou, with a jar of money, didst embark,
 For Balsorah, by sea. But chiefly thou
 In that clear air took life; in Arcady
 The haunted, land of song; and by the wells
 Where most the gods frequent. There Chiron old,
 In a vast mountain antre, taught thee lore:
 The plants, he taught, and by the shining stars
 In forests dim to steer. There hast thou seen
 Immortal Pan dance secret in a glade,
 And, dancing, roll his eyes; these, where they fell,
 Shed glee, and through the congregated oaks
 A flying horror winged; while all the earth
 To the god's pregnant footing thrilled within.
 Or whiles, beside the sobbing stream, he breathed,
 In his clutched pipe, unformed and wizard strains,
 Divine yet brutal; which the forest heard,
 And thou, with awe; and far upon the plain
 The unthinking ploughman started and gave ear.

Now things there are that, upon him who sees,
 A strong vocation lay; and strains there are
 That whoso hears shall hear for evermore.

For evermore thou hear'st immortal Pan
And those melodious godheads, ever young
And ever quiring, on the mountains old.

What was this earth, child of the gods, to thee?
Forth from thy dreamland thou, a dreamer, cam'st,
And in thine ears the olden music rang,
And in thy mind the doings of the dead,
And those heroic ages long forgot.
To a so fallen earth, alas! too late,
Alas! in evil days, thy steps return,
To list at noon for nightingales, to grow
A dweller on the beach till Argo come
That came long since, a lingerer by the pool
Where that desired angel bathes no more.
As when the Indian to Dakota comes,
Or farthest Idaho, and where he dwelt,
He with his clan, a humming city finds;
Thereon awhile, amazed, he stares, and then
To right and leftward, like a questing dog,
Seeks first the ancestral altars, then the hearth
Long cold with rains, and where old terror lodged,
And where the dead. So thee undying Hope,
With all her pack, hunts screaming through the years:
Here, there, thou fleëst; but nor here nor there
The pleasant gods abide, the glory dwells.

That, that was not Apollo, not the god.
This was not Venus, though she Venus seemed
A moment. And though fair yon river move,
She, all the way, from disenchanted fount
To seas unhallowed runs; the gods forsook
Long since her trembling rushes; from her plains
Disconsolate, long since adventure fled;
And now although the inviting river flows,
And every poplared cape, and every bend
Or willowy islet, win upon thy soul
And to thy hopeful shallop whisper speed;
Yet hope not thou at all; hope is no more;
And oh, long since the golden groves are dead,
The faery cities vanished from the land!

Holiday Customs in Italy.

Chi si diverte di poco, è ricco di molto.

(He is richly endowed who is cheaply amused.)—TUSCAN PROVERB.

THE foreign visitor who chances to be in Florence on Ascension Day is surprised at being awakened in the morning by a new street cry, *Canterino! chi vuol canterino? Oh che bel canterino!* and his wonder is scarcely lessened when, on descending to the street, he finds that the loudly-vaunted songsters are not members of the feathered tribe as he had perhaps supposed, but black field-cricket, or pale-green tree-grasshopper, imprisoned in small wicker cages, and sold indiscriminately under the common name of *grilli*. The little captives, who are supplied with fresh leaves for their solace, are bought eagerly for a few sous each, and are kept in durance for the remainder of their days, sometimes surviving their liberty for three or four months.

To buy one's grasshopper ready caged is however but a tame expedient, resorted to by those who have not leisure or spirit to run him down themselves, for the *caccia del grillo* is the orthodox amusement of the day. Unworthy as is the object of the chase, its pursuit furnishes the pretext for a very pretty holiday; and any one who has seen the Cascine in the lovely May weather, gay with merry groups, youths and maidens racing down the long alleys, and children gambolling under the trees, while the more sober pleasure-seekers are contented to sit in the shade, will forgive, for the sake of its accessories, the modest nature of the sport furnished by such exceedingly "small deer." It is a universal picnic, and the long tables laid with white cloths under the stately ilexes, look sufficiently tempting to induce one to taste the various delicacies supplied there, and cooked on the spot over glowing charcoal braziers. *Fritte calde! bell e croccanti!* (Hot fritters! fine and crisp!) cry the vendors, who turn out every form of batter cake with incredible celerity, giving them just sufficiently long immersion in the seething lard to acquire the delicate golden brown tint that seems to justify their praises.

Meantime it remains a mystery why the *grillo* should furnish the motive of this gipsy merry-making, for while usage is nowhere stronger than in Italy, tradition as to the origin or meaning of popular observances is scanty in the extreme. It would seem that in ancient Greece the power of warding off sinister influences was ascribed to the grasshopper, for Peisistratus affixed the image of one to the entrance of the Acropolis with that view. Some idea of good luck may therefore be

associated with it in the popular mind, as it is with the domestic cricket in this country, so that it may be brought into the house as a sort of charm against misfortune. It was a favourite device on Roman gems and signets, and is inscribed on several of those in the British Museum collection. In one a grasshopper charioteer is drawn by butterflies in a biga; in another, an attenuated figure strides off with a locust of giant proportions on his back. One of the Pompeian frescoes, again, is a caricature of a team of grasshoppers harnessed to a chariot, probably in reference to the fanciful resemblance of the insect's head to that of the horse, which has procured for the locust its Italian name of *cavalletta*.

The cicala, whose rasping chorus is the familiar lullaby of the drowsy mid-day heats during the dog-days and *sollione*, has no connection with the grasshopper tribe with which it is often confounded. It is a large four-winged fly, about the size of the first joint of a man's thumb, and the sound produced by it is very like that emitted by the landrail or cornerake. It is a favourite amusement of the Italian children to climb the trees and capture as many as they can find, then, throwing them into a cloth, to sit round it in a circle and enjoy the stunning music of the noisy prisoners. They are however never kept in the house like the *grilli*, and do not seem in such favour now as in the days of Anacreon, for *nojoso come una cicala* is a proverbial description of a tiresome person, and *cicalio* signifies the incessant clatter of tongues. The peasants believe that the cicala lives but one day and sings till it bursts, a notion probably caused by the empty pupa-cases found with a longitudinal split up the back, through which the perfect insect has escaped. Of all popular beliefs connected with the insect world, the most poetic is that in reference to the fireflies, whose multitudinous flashing lends an added charm to the nights of early summer in Italy. One is invariably told that they are only seen while the corn is in ear, as they burn their little lights like so many winged tapers, to honour the wheat in anticipation of its consecration in the mystic sacrifice.

The flight of birds suddenly set at liberty seems a natural image of rejoicing, and thus came to be taken as a symbol of the Resurrection. In Naples, at that point of the service on Easter eve, when the mournful silence of the Passion ceremonies is broken by the joy-bells rung in anticipation of the coming feast, a number of small birds, with ribbons attached to their legs, are suddenly let fly by the congregation, and their uneasy flutterings, as they soar to the length of their tether in partially regained freedom, produce a strange effect in the vaulted aisles of the church. In a rude sacred drama performed on that day in the environs of the same city, birds are allowed to escape from under the robe of the Madonna at the moment that the Resurrection is announced. They were similarly enlarged in some of the Roman Triumphs, as in that of Nero on his return from Greece, when *confetti* were also thrown in the same fashion as at the Carnival at the present day.

Among the popular customs in which animals play a leading part,

that of the blessing of the horses in Rome on St. Anthony's day (January 17) is the most familiar. Every description of vehicle, from the gala coaches of the princes, and the cardinals' state carriages, all scarlet and blazonry, to the peasant's cart and the muleteer's wagon, with horses, mules, and asses all decked out in ribbons and tassels, were then driven in endless procession in front of the church of Sant' Antonio, near Santa Maria Maggiore, where the priests, standing at the door, sprinkled the animals with holy water as they went by. The owners believed that they were thus secured against all maleficent influences for the year, and might defy the power of witchcraft to harm them. A curious hint as to the possible origin of this custom occurs in a passage of St. Jerome, quoted by M. Beugnot in his *Histoire de la Destruction du Paganisme*. The Father tells the story of one Italicus, a Christian, who in the reign of Valentinian lived in Constantia, the port of Gaza, and kept horses for the annual races run in the streets on the occasion of the Consualia or games in honour of equestrian Neptune, specially popular throughout the Roman Empire as having been those at which the followers of Romulus captured their Sabine brides. The horses of Italicus were however invariably defeated, owing, as he supposed, to the aid of magic called in by his pagan adversary, and he appealed at last to St. Hilary for a counter-charm, having recourse to his aid, as he ingenuously confessed, in preference to resorting to that of heathen sorcerers. The Saint at first suggested that he might sell his horses and give the money to the poor, but Italicus, like some modern patrons of the turf, adduced public motives—the desire of maintaining the credit of his native town, and of contributing to the amusement of the people—as reasons for keeping them. Hilary then acceded to his desire, and gave him his own drinking-cup, bidding him sprinkle with water from it his horses, coachmen, chariots, and stables. So efficacious was the assistance of the Saint, that the horses of the pagan competitor were rendered almost incapable of motion, while those of Italicus flew past them triumphantly to the goal, their success at first drawing down the wrath of the multitude, who clamoured for vengeance on the Christian magician, but finally producing the conversion of a number of the spectators, and of the charioteers of the circus.

Although this miracle occurred in Palestine, the Christians in other countries would naturally wish to emulate the example of Italicus, and triumph like him without compromising their faith; while the clergy, anxious to wean their disciples from the practice of heathen incantations, would gladly invoke instead the protection of a Christian saint. The substitution of St. Anthony for St. Hilary was probably owing to a mere coincidence of date, the festivals of the two saints occurring nearly at the same time (on January 14 and 17), so that, as St. Hilary was little known in Italy, the people would easily come to ascribe his powers to a patron more in vogue in their own country, and honoured at the same season of the year.

The horses in Rome have another festival, or series of festivals, during the month of August, when, on every Saturday evening, the Piazza Navona, the ancient Circus Agonalis, is laid under water for their especial benefit, by stopping the outlets of its great fountains. Here they are ridden or driven by grooms and coachmen, splashing up to the girths in the water, and thoroughly enjoying their bath, which also furnishes amusement to the spectators seated high and dry on the steps of Sant' Agnese, or filling the balconies of the adjoining houses. It almost seems as if the Tritons and sea-horses of Bernini's fountain had escaped from their marble basin to prance at large in their native element, and Neptune himself might preside over a scene which irresistibly reminds one that his ancient worship took place during this month, and that his favourite animal was invariably associated with it.

The famous *palio*, or horse race, of Siena, annually run in the public square in the middle of August, seems a still more obvious reminiscence of the Consualia or equestrian games of Neptune, formerly held on the 18th of that month, and celebrated down to the fourth century, as we have seen from the story of Italicus, with chariot races in the streets of every city in the Roman Empire. The competing horses in Siena are the representatives of its seventeen quarters, or *contrade*, each distinguished by its own ensign and device, as "the Wave," "the Tower," "the Goose," and each the object of the liveliest animosity to the inhabitants of all the others. The rough pavement of the *Campo* *—from its shape aptly likened to a scallop shell—makes it seem singularly ill-chosen for a racecourse, but its shelving sides lend themselves admirably to the accommodation of the spectators. The horses, gaily caparisoned, are led on in procession, each accompanied by several pages in mediæval costume, who execute a very pretty dance or game with flags, tossing them into the air, with many graceful movements. The excitement of the populace sometimes almost threatens the peace of the city, and the victorious champion is loaded with honours and caresses by his partisans, who conduct him in triumph through their own quarter of the town.

Before leaving the part of the subject which seems to recall the worship of Neptune, we will mention another usage practised in the month sacred to him, which may therefore be classed with those already enumerated, although in this case he is honoured by human, not equine votaries. This is the singular custom prevailing among the fishermen and divers, or *sommozzatori*, of Santa Lucia in Naples, of celebrating the feast of Santa Maria della Catena on the last Sunday in August, by jumping into the sea in their clothes. Popular tradition, however, is at no loss to explain the custom in its own way, without any assistance from classical memories; and narrates how a number of the Santa-Luciani having been captured by corsairs, and unexpectedly delivered by Don John of

* Probably so called because it was the ancient Campus Martius, the scene of all popular exercises.

Austria, the joy of their friends and relatives at their return impelled them to leap into the waves and swim to meet them.

The most characteristic feature of the Roman Carnival, the flight of the riderless winged horses through the parting human stream in the Corso at the close of each day's revels, is perhaps a relic of the worship of another divinity; as Equiria, or horse races, in honour of Mars, were annually held in the Campus Martius on February 27, that is about the season of the year that Lent begins.

The use of flowers in religious worship is suggested by their obvious appropriateness; and in Italy, where they abound, they are lavished on the decoration of altars and churches, particularly during Holy Week and the month of May. Among more special usages in connection with them, the Infiorata of Genzano, so eloquently described by Hans Andersen in *Der Improvisator*, will occur to all readers' minds. The people of this picturesque village, near the Lake of Nemi, adorn their narrow streets, for the procession of the Octave of Corpus Domini, with a carpet more gorgeous than ever left the looms of Herat, for it is composed of the petals of flowers stripped off and combined in fanciful patterns, to which the depth and softness of nature's own colouring lends a glow that human pigments might strive to emulate in vain.

There is a tiny rock in the Lago Maggiore, opposite Pallanza, called L'Isola di San Giovanni, and containing a little chapel of St. John the Baptist, in which mass is said once a year, on his feast, June 24. Then boats are seen putting off from the shore, laden with people in holiday costume, who disembark on the islet, until the church is filled to overflowing, and the late arrivals have to perform their devotions in the open air. All carry in their hands bunches of wild herbs or flowers, principally camomile, which are blessed by the priest during the service; and as the congregation wave these rustic bouquets aloft for the benediction, the little temple seems converted into a bower of greenery agitated by the breeze. A somewhat similar ceremony takes place in the cathedral of Florence on the feast of San Zanobi, an early bishop of that city. It occurs on May 25, when quantities of roses are blessed in the church, and sold at the doors by hawkers, whose incessant cry of *Rose benedette!* echoes through the Piazza del Duomo. It would not appear that any special virtue is ascribed to them, any more than to the camomile of San Giovanni, save a general association of pious remembrance.

Roses are so indissolubly associated with the feast of Pentecost in Italy, that it derives from them its popular name *Pasqua rosa*. The Whitsunday service in the Pantheon is accompanied (or was up to the Italian occupation of Rome) by a singular ceremony, the raining down of a cloud of roses through the "eye" of the building, or opening in its roof, to signify the visible descent of the fiery tongues. Roses, too, are used in profusion in the decoration of dinner-tables, and all scenes of festive reunion on this day.

In some rural districts of Italy rose leaves are strewn before a fair

one's door by the swain who wishes to make her a declaration of love, which she tacitly accepts by allowing them to remain there, or rejects by brushing them away.

In wandering among the Tuscan Apennines, curiosity is sometimes roused by the sight of a withered branch carefully bound to the stem of a chestnut-tree here and there. This is one of the sprays of olive solemnly blessed in the churches on Palm Sunday, with a special benediction for the places they may be taken to, and thus supposed to extend to the woods where they are attached to the trees. In the same way the sacred olive branches, after being borne by the Athenians in the festival of the Pyanepsia, were affixed near their house-doors as amulets, by which scarcity and want were averted.

On the Saturday preceding the first Sunday in May, the relics of St. Januarius are carried through the streets; and the ceremony was formerly called the procession of the *preti inghirlandati*, because the priests who composed it were accustomed to have their heads crowned with leaves and garlands of flowers. Within recent years the custom has been abandoned, and only the crucifix borne in the procession is thus entwined. The usage is explained by a story that when the body of St. Januarius was first deposited in a church outside the gates, and visited by the clergy of Naples proceeding bareheaded in solemn order, they were so inconvenienced by the heat of the sun that they snatched leaves and branches to make a covering for their heads. This explanation, however, bears all the impress of having been suggested by the circumstance it purports to account for, and the procession is probably a reminiscence of pagan ceremonial, blindly transmitted from generation to generation. Flowers were much used in all the classical solemnities, particularly during the month of May, towards the end of which occurred the feast of the markets, when they were decked with all the buds and blossoms of the season, in honour of Mercury, the patron of commerce.

Having thus glanced briefly at some local usages identified with particular objects of association, such as birds, beasts, or flowers, we now come to those which have a less distinct significance, and are the occasions of general rejoicing, celebrated either by fireworks, feasting, or open-air amusements in some form. Foremost among these come the Christmas festivities, which there is no doubt had originally no Christian pretext, and were so strongly condemned by the primitive Church, that in some places, as, for instance, in Florence, the beginning of the year was transferred to March 25, in order to get rid of the pagan rites with which it was associated. Innocent as is now the usage of exchanging New Year's presents with friends, it was then done as a form of homage to Janus, the god of the year, specially honoured in that capacity in its first month; and the giving of *strenia* on January 1 was vehemently denounced by early Councils as an act of pagan worship. The Saturnalia, the great holidays of slaves and inferiors, began on the 17th and

lasted till the 24th of December, thus coinciding with the period of the winter solstice, sacred to Saturn as the god of Time. These were the feasts for which, after vainly struggling to abolish them altogether, the Church finally substituted the Christian celebration of the Nativity, while the first day of the New Year, the feast of Janus, was consecrated to the commemoration of the Circumcision.

It is in Rome and Naples that the most distinctively Italian Christmas usages are to be found, widely different in some respects from those prevailing in northern countries. In both cities the approaching festival is heralded by the appearance, at the beginning of Advent, of the *zampognari* and *pifferari*; wild figures, herdsmen of Calabria or the Abruzzi, come to salute the Madonna with their untutored melodies, by playing the Ave Maria before her shrines at the corners of the streets. The piety of the faithful sees in them the representatives of the shepherds of Bethlehem, and thus finds in their devotion a poetical and beautiful illustration of the Gospel text; but, looked at from a different point of view, they furnish an instance of the inexplicable fashion in which Christian and pagan traditions are blended in Italy, like two sets of pictures painted on the same canvas one over the other. No one can look at these wild herdsmen of the mountains, their lower extremities clad in shaggy goatskins, the primitive instruments of sylvan music at their lips, without being reminded of the mythical Pan and his semi-human train of votaries. And when we remember that the Faunalia, or festival of Faunus, the shepherd god of the Latins, was held on the nones of December, exactly at this season, and that, as the grandson of Saturn, the honours paid to him would naturally be intimately associated with those of his divine progenitor, we cannot help seeing in the *zampognari* and *pifferari* vestiges of a worship older than that of the crib of Bethlehem.

During the ten days preceding Christmas, a fair is held in Naples, and the narrow footways of the Toledo (now Via Roma) are blocked from end to end with temporary booths. The wares offered for sale are of the simplest description, consisting principally of gay woollen scarves, cheap trinkets, and glass and china of inferior quality; but there is enough of colour and glitter to produce a pretty kaleidoscopic effect when touched by the magic of the southern sun. Only, indeed, under the benign sky of Naples could the season of the winter solstice be expected to furnish ten days of sufficiently fine weather for this gipsy shop-keeping, which consequently is not attempted further north.

As Christmas Eve approaches, the streets are lined with tubs and tanks of water containing monstrous eels, and the ordinary clamour of Naples is redoubled by the vociferations of *Capitoni! Oh! che bei capitoni!* from the proprietors of these vivaria. For the popular festivities culminate here—not on Christmas Day, as in northern countries, but on its vigil, coincident with the closing night of the ancient Saturnalia, and the *capitone*, a gigantic freshwater eel, is the main feature of

the *cenone*, or great supper of fish, with which it is celebrated. This is the principal revel of the year with the lower classes of Rome and Naples, and so great is their attachment to it, that stories are told of criminals escaped from justice, unable to resist the temptation of coming back by stealth to take part in it, and thus easily captured by the police, who are quite aware of their proclivities. The Church, having ordained a strict fast on Christmas Eve, is allowed to prescribe the quality, but has no power to limit the quantity, of the viands consumed; and so great are the excesses committed by the Neapolitans on eels and every other sort of fish, that the druggists' shops are thronged on the following day with wretches trying to get rid of the bad effects of their gluttony by having recourse to bleeding or some equally favourite remedy. Among the better classes lobsters are so much in demand for presents at this season, that as much as a hundred francs (four pounds) is said to be sometimes paid for one.

The word *capitone* may, perhaps, be a corruption of *caput cœnæ*, as the Romans called the first course of their banquets, in which fish always figured extensively. As regards other classical associations with this eel, in addition to the notorious fondness of the Roman *gourmets* for *murcænæ*, we find that the Boeotians were remarkable for offering sacrifices of large fresh-water eels caught in Lake Copais; and when interrogated by a stranger as to the reason of this practice, returned the surly answer that they followed the customs of their ancestors, but were not bound to explain them to foreigners. The divinity in whose honour they were offered is not recorded, nor is the season of the celebration; but perhaps the conjecture may be hazarded that as the serpent circled in a ring was the emblem of Saturn, the eel, as capable of assuming the same form, was in some places substituted for it; and thus the hecatombs slaughtered on Christmas Eve would be a relic of the most ancient worship in Italy.

Another vagrant dealer who appears in the streets of Naples as the herald of Christmas, is the *tronaro* or vendor of cheap fireworks, whose temporary stall, bristling with every sort of explosive, is besieged by boys and men for days before the festivity. The result is apparent on Christmas Eve, when the timid visitor might imagine, from the incessant explosions on all sides, that the city was undergoing bombardment, and strangers are warned to remain indoors, or at least avoid the great thoroughfares from midday until dawn on the following morning, if they wish to preserve life and limb from the results of this reckless abuse of gunpowder. Even at the very church doors *botte* and *risposte*, as these fulminating compounds are called, explode under one's very feet, while from the houses and court-yards crazy pistols, fowling-pieces, and muskets are discharged, crammed to the muzzle with powder to make the detonation more stunning. Happiest of all is the man or boy who possesses a cannon or other piece of ordnance, and can spend the night firing minute-guns for the edification of his neighbours. It may be imagined that sleep is thus rendered impossible, but that is a minor evil

compared with other results of this infernal jubilee. Every year there are carried to the hospital, in the twenty-four hours preceding Christmas Day, from forty to fifty victims of their own or their neighbours' recklessness; so that between the results of fireworks and feasting it is the busiest day of the year for doctors and surgeons. Every form of government and misgovernment in Naples, Spanish viceroys, Bourbon police ministers, and Piedmontese prefects, have opposed this practice, and in a series of proclamations have vainly threatened the galleys, imprisonment, fines, or forced labour to all who persist in it; but it survives dynasties and revolutions with a pertinacity that defies legal remedies, while in this case, at any rate, no classical precedent can be quoted in justification.

The decking out of the *presepio*, or representation of the Nativity, by a group of dolls with pasteboard scenery, furnishes amusement to the Roman and Neapolitan children, both old and young; and besides those to be seen in the churches, nearly every private house of the better class has one, more or less artistically arranged. Without pretending to trace this practice, so naturally evoked by Italian piety, to the classical custom of giving small images as presents, particularly by parents to children, on the *Sigillaria*, or last two days of the Saturnalia, the two usages may be placed side by side for the sake of a certain shadowy resemblance between them.

With Christmas Eve the popular rejoicings come to an end, and the feast itself is unmarked by any special demonstration beyond the usual religious services. New Year's Day, or *Capo d'anno* as it is called, is kept as in other countries, save that the sale in the streets of Naples of *fritte*, made with oil and honey, recalls the similar cakes baked in honour of Janus on this day. New Year's greetings, in the shape of visiting cards, are so profusely exchanged among the better classes in Italy, that a special tariff is annually published for their transmission through the post. They are also sent by servants, and those in Rome have an ingenious plan for saving themselves the trouble of going from house to house on this errand. They all meet in the Piazza Navona, and there effect a general exchange of their masters' cards of compliment, each in turn announcing the names of those to whom he is directed to convey them, and handing them over there and then to his fellow-servants, as they answer to the call.

On the eve of the Epiphany, January 5, an extraordinary charivari, called the *Befana*, takes place in the market-places of Rome and Florence, in which every imaginable instrument of noise has its share, without any aim on the part of the performers, save the production of the loudest and most disagreeable sound possible. Towards midnight, when it is at its height, the little Piazza of Saint Eustachio, near the Pantheon, is a perfect pandemonium, where trumpets, drums, whistles, bird-calls, bells, and horns, bray, rattle, shriek, squeak, jangle, and clang, in every imaginable pitch of discord. Troops of young men, holding to each

other's coat-tails, rush wildly through the crowd, each adding his quota to the universal clamour; and if any spectator is seen to shrink away from the noisy band, he or she is sure to receive a special blast into the ear from each in succession. All, however, is done in perfect good-humour, and no one dreams of giving or taking offence. The *Befana* in Florence is held in the Mercato Nuovo, during the afternoon and evening; and its prevailing feature is the use of glass trumpets, nearly a yard long, producing a note of incredibly discordant resonance. These instruments of torture sometimes survive by some days the occasion for which they are more especially called into existence, and it certainly is with a feeling of satisfaction, after being serenaded by one for some time, that one hears the shiver on the pavement, and exclamation of dismay from the performer, that announce its untimely end. This singular custom is explained as a commemoration of the trumpets supposed to have heralded the advent of the Three Kings, and in descriptions of the mediæval representations in which the procession of the Magi was performed, mention is not omitted of the conchs and trumpets sounded before them as they arrived on the scene, each from a different quarter of the city. This explanation, adequate or inadequate, is the one generally received to account for the *Befana*, and its riotous hubbub goes on from year to year, unquestioned and unchecked, affording, at any rate, a harmless outlet for the spirit of frolic, which attains a fuller development in the Carnival.

This annual masquerade is supposed to draw its origin from some classical celebration, but does not seem to correspond very closely with any. The *Faunalia*,* in honour of Faunus, the *Lupercalia* of Pan, and the *Quirinalia* of Romulus, were indeed held on February 13, 15, and 17, while, as we have seen, the worship of Mars was celebrated by equestrian games towards the end of the month; but there is no hint in any ancient writer of such a scene of general revelry as is now to be found in Italian cities at this season. Some trace of the *Lupercalia*, in which two youths, their foreheads smeared with the blood of sacrificial goats, ran through the city, scantily clad in skins, and with wands in their hands, may perhaps have been preserved in the races of men and boys which were long a part of the Roman Carnival; particularly if we may trust John Evelyn's statement, that in his day they were run in full heroic costume. These and the horse-races were, no doubt, survivals of ancient customs, but the general character of the Carnival pageantry is rather mediæval than classical. The Carnival of Ivrea is singular in the closing of its mummeries with the ceremony of the *scarlo*, a word whose meaning is now lost. In each parish of the town a pole is set up, adorned with flags, and a pile of combustibles heaped round it, on which, as soon as it is kindled, an effigy is thrown, after being dragged through the streets with contumely. The first sod is turned for the

* Celebrated also in December.

planting of the pole, and the torch applied to the pile, by the most recently married pair in each parish, the usage being supposed to commemorate the death of a feudal tyrant by the hand of a bride, whom he had carried off from her rightful husband.

During the three last days of Holy Week, all carriage traffic is suspended in the Toledo, the great thoroughfare of Naples, which, by a strange incongruity with the spirit of that penitential season, becomes then the scene of a fashionable promenade. Ladies of the highest rank, from the Queen downwards, are seen there on foot for the only time of the year, performing the visits to the churches, which furnish the motive for their appearing thus in the streets.

The service of Holy Saturday in the Cathedral of Florence is signalised by the ceremony of the "Dove," or *Colombina*, the messenger of peace being represented by a blazing meteor, kindled by the officiating priest during high mass, and launched from the altar along a wire which communicates with a great trophy of fireworks erected in front of the baptistery. Having ignited this explosive mass by its contact, it ought to return to the high altar as it came, travelling along the great aisle over the heads of the congregation, which on this occasion includes the dregs of the populace of Florence. Its failure to complete its journey successfully is considered of most disastrous augury for the harvest, and the peasants who throng the piazza return to their homes filled with the melancholy conviction that their crops are doomed; as in the event of its fulfilling its mission, they are correspondingly reassured. The usage seems to have no special significance, save as a form of the general rejoicing for the Resurrection, thus noisily announced to the city; for the explosion of the fireworks is the signal for the simultaneous ringing of all the church bells, which have been hushed in token of mourning during the two preceding days. The great pile of fireworks, called the *carro*, is always provided by the Pazzi family, in memory of their ancestor who, in the time of the first Crusade, brought home, according to the popular myth, a lighted torch kindled at the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre, riding all the way with his face to the horse's tail, to prevent it from being extinguished in its motion through the air. The true, or at least probable, version is that he brought a piece of the sacred rock, still preserved in the Cathedral of Florence, and from which the symbolical fire of the altar is on this day rekindled, according to the ritual of the Roman Catholic Church.

The custom of eating and presenting eggs at Easter is as prevalent in Italy as in other countries; in Naples they are given by servants to their masters under the name of *coluri*, and figure in the day's festivities in other forms as well. Of these the most characteristic is the *casatello*, a round cake, which may be made of any size or variety of ingredients, according as it is destined to appear in high or low society, but which always has an egg whole and in the shell embedded in its centre, and fixed in its position by cross bands of dough. This universal connection

of eggs with Easter-tide does not seem to rest on any Christian symbolism, nor does there appear to be any obvious reason why they should be considered typical of the Resurrection. In pagan imagery the egg was assigned to Astarte, the Phœnician Venus, as an emblem of the fructifying forces of nature, and may thus have come to be associated with April, the month sacred to Aphrodite, the western Astarte, in or near which Easter always falls.

What the egg is at Paschal time, the fish is on April 1, and *pesce d'Aprile* is the name for that form of fooling which, in Italy as elsewhere, is associated with the day. The confectioners' windows are decorated with sugar models of the various denizens of the deep, from the oyster, ensconced in his shell, to the scaly mullet and the glistening eel, all such lifelike counterfeits that they might make an April fool of a pelican, how much more easily of the unwary human being these sugar fish are intended to delude.

The most celebrated festival of the year in Naples and its neighbourhood, the combined pilgrimage to the Monte Vergine and the Madonna dell' Arco, takes place at Whitsuntide, and recalls more vividly than any other modern observance, the rites of ancient worship. The mountain now consecrated to the Virgin, forming the great sanctuary of Campania, was equally venerated in classical times, as the site of a temple of Cybele and other pagan shrines. Christian tradition avers that that dedicated to the great mother of the gods was miraculously shivered into ruins at the instant of the Nativity, but it was only in 1124 that a church was erected on the spot where it had stood. Many miracles are claimed for the Madonna of Monte Vergine, familiarly called by the Neapolitans *Mamma Schiavona*, and the pilgrimage to her shrine furnishes them with the great excitement of the year. As early as the previous Friday night Naples is awakened by the cannon-shots and *feux de joie* which announce that the first detachments of pilgrims are already starting, and throughout the following day (Whitsun eve) the road to Nola is alive with merry parties on their way to the venerated shrine. At break of day on Sunday the mountain is ascended on foot, and the religious exercises gone through, after which the scene changes to one of wild revelry, and the pagan element begins to assert itself. Dancing, singing, and shouting, the women bearing pine branches gathered on the mountain, the crowd returns to Nola, where the fun grows fast and furious, and license and riot reign supreme through the night. The market-place is a scene of truly southern festivity, where women are dancing the tarantella with the gestures of mænads, and rival singers, as in the Greek solemnities, contest the palm of victory, public acclamation deciding between them. These minstrels, called *canta figliuole*, from the refrain of their chorus, are a special feature of the occasion, and are generally Neapolitan lazzaroni brought by their patrons to enliven them on the way. The drive from Nola to the Madonna dell' Arco on Whit-Monday is the next stage of the festival, and is performed at

racing speed, every vehicle vying with its neighbour, and every driver urging his steed with whip and voice to a reckless breakneck gallop. Flags are streaming from the carriages, ribbons from the horses' heads, every crazy perch is crammed as only Neapolitans can cram into anything on wheels; the women are laughing and waving in the sun pine boughs wreathed with vine leaves, while garlands of hazel nuts are on their heads or round their necks; the men are shouting, gesticulating, applauding, and from group after group the chorus of *canta figliuole* rises all along the road. "Evoe Bacchus!" one half expects to hear instead, but Bacchus in these days is worshipped in silence, and his name is heard upon the hills no more.

This noisy procession, as it nears its goal at the foot of Vesuvius, is met by another, which comes towards it with dance and song, consisting of the young girls of Sant' Anastasia, who having bathed that morning in pools strewn with fresh rose leaves, and wreathed their brows with roses, myrtle, leaves of the ash, and *antriti*, as the chaplets of hazel nuts are called, have gone forth to meet the pilgrims of Monte Vergine, and escort them to the sanctuary near at hand. The two streams fuse into one and ascend together to pay their devotions to the Madonna dell' Arco; then, after more tarantella dancing, more shouting, singing, and gesticulating, the cavalcade drives off to Naples to parade up and down at the hour of the fashionable muster on the Chiaia. There the pilgrim vehicles, with their flaunting ribbons, streamers, and flags, take their place beside the carriages of the aristocracy; and the stout, swarthy peasant women of Campania, in their substantial holiday finery, and wearing their hoarded ornaments of massive gold, can for once exchange stare for stare on equal terms with duchesses and countesses. This is the closing scene in the famous pilgrimage of Monte Vergine, in which the students of antiquity find such close analogies to the worship of the gods of Greece. The most singular superstition connected with it is that which attaches the visible effects of Divine wrath to the consumption of animal food within a considerable distance of the sanctuary; the popular belief being that the mountain, on any transgression, will be shrouded in storm clouds, and fulminated by the thunderbolts of heaven. Even the women think it necessary to cleanse their hair of the grease and pomatum they use so freely at other times, and are consequently to be seen with their tresses in all stages of dishevelment. This observance has no connection with any fast of the Roman Church, and is possibly a classical tradition inherited from the worship of Cybele, as her priests were forbidden the use of meat, also prohibited during the Eleusinian rites.

Another of the open-air holidays of the environs of Naples is the Feast of the Four Altars, on the Octave of Corpus Domini. Temporary shrines are erected on the Portici Road, at the base of Vesuvius, at four several points about a quarter of a mile apart, where as many different streams of lava are said to have been checked by Divine interposition. Gay with flowers and garlands, gorgeous with drapery of scarlet and

gold, and blazing with lights, which in the still air require no protection, these little wayside temples have a strangely picturesque effect, as they shine and glitter in the summer night. The road connecting them, too is illuminated and decorated, overarched with green, and festooned with many-coloured lamps, in the light of which all the varieties of wheeled vehicles rejoiced in by the Neapolitans flash up and down at full speed, the occupants of each contributing to the general brilliancy of the scene, by burning blue lights, Roman candles, rockets, or squibs. Fortunately the Neapolitan hacks are as well trained to the noise and smell of powder as so many cavalry chargers, and bear the most startling sights and sounds with the *ne plus ultra* of equine philosophy. Perhaps the ancestors of this people celebrated in somewhat similar fashion (minus the fireworks), the Compitalia, or Feast of the Lares, in the public ways, which, however, took place about a month earlier, on May 2.

High revel is still held in Naples in honour of the Madonna of Piedigrotta, although her feast is no longer graced by royal pomp and show, as under the Bourbon dynasty. The rejoicings begin on the eve of the holiday, or September 7, when the *torronaro* begins to set up his booth, piled with castellated erections of honey and almonds, on the Chiaia, when the sellers of lemonade and iced water, flavoured with aniseed or fennel, seem endowed with extra power of throat and lung for vociferating these refreshing compounds, and the tables at the *Scoglio di Frisio*, the great restaurant of Posilipo, tempt customers with all those unspeakable varieties of marine molluscs, indiscriminately devoured there under the general name of *frutta di mare*. This feast is the occasion of one of those musical contests, which again recall the classic times of ancient Greece, though here the struggle for pre-eminence is between melodies, not men. The newest street songs being rehearsed for the assembled crowd, one is selected by general consent as most worthy to be the popular air, *par excellence*, of the coming year; and it will now reign supreme on the lips of all from Fuorigrotta to Capodimonte, and round the bay from the Cape of Posilipo to that of Minerva. The strangest thing about these popular melodies, which eventually make their way all over the world, is that they are never traceable to any individual composer, but seem a spontaneous creation of the popular mind, springing up like a heaven-born flower of genius, amid the squalor and rags of the dens of Naples. A liberal display of fireworks honours the Madonna of Piedigrotta with the usual amount of noise and glare, but the illumination of the bay by means of myriads of floating lamps composed of hemispheres of orange peel is no longer to be seen.

The taste displayed by the Southern Italians in their festive decorations amounts to genius, and they effect with the simplest means what the most elaborate mechanism fails to secure elsewhere. Sorrento is well worth a visit in the autumn, were it only to see it decked out for the various feasts of the Madonna kept at this time, particularly that of the Rosary on the first Sunday of October. The liquid shadow of an

Italian street raises colour to its highest pitch of intensity, and its perspective concentrates all the effects of decoration into a harmony of wonderful brilliancy and softness. The Sorrentines make the most of these advantages, and their little town in its gala dress of green arches, and festoons of gaily-coloured draperies, hung from house to house, and window to window, with the bluest of skies above, and the purest of air around, need not envy the proudest capital decked out for an emperor's fête. After dark its aspect is still more striking, for then the effect of colour is supplied by multitudes of variegated lamps, red, white, and green, hung amid the foliage, and across the street, in every variety of graceful curve. They are merely tiny cups of tinted glass with oil and a wick, sold for a sou apiece, but the profusion with which they are used, and the taste shown in their arrangement, produce a magical result; the innumerable points of coloured light combining in a gem-like illumination that is singularly brilliant and effective.

These southern holidays are nearly all held in honour of some feast of the Madonna, while in northern Italy it is more often the titular saint of the parish, or celestial patron of the city or commune, whose day is celebrated with special pomp in each district. St. John Baptist's day, June 24, is thus kept as the yearly festival of Florence, with a fair of trumpery wares in the space in front of the Baptistry, and races of hackney-coaches in the Piazza of Santa Maria Maggiore. Thus, the same honours, doubtless paid originally to Mars, the ancient patron of the city, are somewhat incongruously transferred to his Christian successor.

A more singular and characteristic observance is that annually renewed at Pisa in honour of San Ranieri, once the bishop, now the tutelary saint of the city, whose festival falls on June 13. The *Giucco del Ponte*, or Game of the Bridge, is no doubt shorn of some of its ancient pomp and circumstance, but is still contested with sufficient earnestness to give a semblance of reality to its mimic fray. It is the subject of a curious old treatise* published more than a century and a half ago, in which the forms and ceremonies used in sending and accepting the challenge, the armour and weapons, the order of battle prescribed, the laws and regulations of the game, are detailed at the greatest length, but of which we shall try to give a more summary account. As to its origin various traditions are cited, as that it was instituted by the Emperor Hadrian in 119, or by Nero, who compelled the Pisan citizens to provide a gladiatorial combat for him, and desired that it should be annually renewed. The most generally received legend, however, is that which claims it as a perpetual commemoration of the valour of the Pisan women, who in 1005, their liege lords being absent on a foreign war, were led on by a heroine, named Chinsica Sismondi, to repulse an

* *L' Oplomachia Pisana, ossia il Giucco del Ponte*, di Camillo Ranieri Borghi. Lucca, 1713.

assault made on the city at one of its bridges by Musetto, King of Sardinia, and his Saracen followers. However this may be, there is at least no doubt that it is a very ancient usage, as it was fought out on the frozen Arno in 1167 (being then performed on St. Anthony's day, January 17), during a frost so severe that wagons were able to cross the river on the ice. It is under the special protection of St. Catherine of Siena, for she, being at Pisa, was disturbed at her devotions in the church of Santa Cristina by an unusual noise of drums and trumpets, and, learning that it was only the annual game about to begin, fervently prayed that it might occasion no fatal accident either then or at any future time. She is believed also to have miraculously interfered, by the intervention of a violent thunderstorm, to prevent its performance altogether on one occasion, after her death; making it known subsequently that she had done so, foreseeing that the excitement of the population would inevitably have led to bloodshed if it had gone on. A solemn mass, performed in her honour in the church of Santa Cristina, is therefore part of the ceremonial of the day, attendance at it being prescribed for the Cavalieri di Mezzogiorno, or champions of the southern section of the city, while their opponents, the Cavalieri di Tramontana, assist at a high mass of the Madonna in their particular church. These two parties, each divided into six squadrons, draw up in regular order on each side of the Ponte Nuovo, where they meet in the shock of battle, victory being decided in favour of those who gain most ground from their opponents, and eventually force them across the bridge. Each side has its standards and officers, and the defeated party has the right of challenging in the ensuing year. The victors are entitled to march with torches after nightfall to take possession of the hostile camp, and on the following Sunday to celebrate a formal triumph, parading through the streets in procession, and leading their prisoners in the wake of lofty cars on which the victorious general rides in state. An imitation of the Pisan tournament was performed on the Ponte Santa Trinità in Florence on October 28, 1608, to celebrate the marriage of Cosmo, Grand Prince of Tuscany, with Magdalene of Austria. The original style of the game was *Giucoco di Mazza e Scudo*, until, in the time of Giovanni delle Bande Nere, the arms of the Italian soldiers being changed, the name of *Giucoco del Ponte* was substituted.

The festivals of bridges, and the many superstitions connected with them, remind us that they were considered sacred by the Romans, and sacrifices offered on them, so that some ingenious etymologists have derived *pontifex* from *pons*. In the mountain village of the Ponte a Serraglio an ancient usage prevailed until very recently of kindling a great pile of combustibles on the evening of May 3 in the centre of the bridge over the Lima, from which the village takes its name. No reason could be assigned for this ceremony, which was called *fare baldoria*, and was persisted in without any association or tradition to account for it, until it was abandoned within the last two or three years, from fear of its setting

fire to the houses on either side. The widely-diffused custom of kindling fires on the hill-tops on St. John's eve (supposed to be a relic of the ancient worship of Baal in connection with the summer solstice) prevails in some of the mountain districts of Italy; and among the Apennines, as peak after peak blazes out of the darkness of the summer night, the effect is singularly striking.

In the district of Bassano on the Brenta the supposed descendants of the Cimbri, defeated by Marius, have until very recent times remained a race apart, speaking a dialect of German, and retaining some peculiar customs analogous to those of Celtic nations. They wake the dead in similar fashion, and where a traveller dies on the road plant a cross, and raise a cairn, every passer-by casting a stone, while a man who dies a violent death is laid out with his hat and shoes on, as though dressed for a journey. None of these are Italian customs, but are confined exclusively to the inhabitants of the Seven Communes, which contain all that remain of this ancient race.

In Italy the dead, too, have their feast, and the cemeteries on November 1 and 2 are the favourite resort of the whole population. That of San Miniato near Florence is particularly interesting, both from its splendid situation commanding the city, the whole valley of the Arno, and all its encircling Apennines, and from the beauty of the floral decorations lavished on the graves during these two days. Some are literally covered by masses of flowers, some hung with wreaths and crosses woven of the loveliest blossoms, mixed with pale plummy grasses, others converted into a temporary garden with plants and shrubs concealing and adorning them. In Rome up to a recent date the Octave of the Dead was celebrated by the performance of sacred dramas in the cemeteries, which was no doubt a mediæval practice. The custom of hanging garlands on the tombs of deceased friends prevailed in classical times, as did that of sprinkling the dead with consecrated water, which was scattered over them with a branch. The Neapolitans are singular in the farewell they take of a young girl; at whom, when just about to be interred, her nearest relatives violently fling a shower of comfits before leaving her to the tomb.

The spirit of provincial and municipal exclusiveness, still so strong in Italy, tends to keep alive the peculiar observances of each section of the population; and it must be confessed that obnoxious as this spirit is to politicians, it adds to the charm of travel in the country, giving variety of local colouring, and bringing the visitor into contact with a fresh set of feelings and traditions at each stage of his journey. The fusion of all the races of the Peninsula into a single nationality is annually celebrated in the feast of the *Statuto*, or constitution of the united kingdom, on the first Sunday of June; but this official holiday is little marked or observed by the people at large, while they cling fondly to every local usage, whose origin and meaning are perhaps lost in the mid-night of the past. Nowhere has the legacy of antiquity so binding a

force on the practice of to-day—nowhere is “our forefathers did so” so all-sufficing and imperative a reason for following blindly in the ancestral groove as in Italy, where the long memories of the ages stir darkly in the popular mind, and the associations of thirty centuries have accumulated stratum above stratum upon the soil. Oscan and Etruscan, Sabine and Ligurian, Greek and Latin, Goth, Lombard, and Saracen, have all been here, and have all left their footprints on the land; but while each has contributed his quota to the manners of the people, none has left a lasting memory in their hearts; and a faith alien to all alike has adopted and assimilated, purified and metamorphosed the incongruous mixture of elements they had left behind. Thus usage survives while motive is forgotten, and the trappings of the elder mythologies are sometimes strangely altered to fit the exigencies of the new creed. The fast of Cybele is grafted on the pilgrimage of the Madonna; the cakes of Janus are baked for the feast of the Circumcision; the games of Mars appropriated to the glorification of St. John, and the symbol of Ash-taroath exchanged by those who celebrate the mystery of the Resurrection. But how long will these old observances survive amid the utilitarian tendencies of the nineteenth century, and must they not soon be obliterated by the spirit of an age which cuts through, treads down, and bridges over, all the inequalities of human nature, as its iron roads do those of the earth’s surface, and which aims more and more at reducing the globe and its inhabitants to one dead level of uniform monotony?

E. M. C.

Voltaire and Shakespeare.

Romains, j'aime la gloire et ne veux point m'en taire,
Des travaux des humains c'est le digne salaire ;
Qui n'ose la vouloir, n'ose la mériter.

VOLTAIRE'S *Catalina*.

By great works and by frivolous ones, by the inspirations of art and by the fatuities of cynical license, by untiring mental activity and boundless curiosity, Voltaire attained a literary glory which, in its kind, has never been equalled. In the eighteenth century it was truly said that letters reigned over Europe, and Voltaire reigned over letters. After that of Frederick the Great, who became his humble pupil and disciple, Voltaire's was the greatest name in Europe. He bore down all rivals, and played the despot in every branch of literature. He was the first poet of the epoch, the first critic, the first historian, and the first pamphleteer. It was his fatality ; it was the right of his indefatigable talent. It was Voltaire who directed the attention of the public mind, and taught his contemporaries to look around and outside of themselves. It was he who first brought the French nation into communication with their neighbours, and extended relations which had hitherto existed only between the Court of Versailles and the Court of St. James's into relations between the French people and the English people. The men of the seventeenth century had troubled themselves but little about the manners, the institutions, or the literature of their neighbours. The political and social domination of France gave her a proud and careless security. As almost all nations piqued themselves on imitating her, she did not for a moment think of imitating them in turn. England especially had been held in horror, as a country of heretics that had just been agitated by a fearful revolution, and, although political interests often brought the Cabinets of the two countries together, although the alliance by marriage between the families of Charles II. and Louis XIV., and, at a later period, the long exile of James II., must have brought English ideas into France, no traces of them are to be found in the literature of the time. The communication was between the two Courts, and not between the two countries. It was by one of his most celebrated, most persecuted, and most powerful works, the *Lettres philosophiques sur les Anglais*, that Voltaire gave the first impulse to that intellectual movement in France which culminated in the Revolution of 1789, and which led to the reformation of the whole literary, philosophical, and social activity of the country. Since Luther, no more mighty renovator has

appeared. By his immense glory, his long life, his marvellous wit, and his universal clearness, he did more than any other man ever did to put the ideas of Europe in common. But, if no one has rendered his ideas more popular, no one has more freely and systematically borrowed the ideas of others. He imitated the poetic pomp of the seventeenth century, and the boldness and freedom of the English stage, while all his philosophy is borrowed from the English sceptics. This flexibility and indefatigable mobility constitutes Voltaire's very genius. Imitation forms part of his originality.

In the present article it is proposed to trace a curious and neglected chapter in literary history: to relate how Voltaire introduced Shakespeare to the French; how he imitated him; how the public, little by little, began to appreciate the innovations of Voltaire; how rapidly the enthusiasm for Shakespeare grew in intensity; how, after having for twenty years lent his approval to the movement, the author of *Zaïre* suddenly turned round upon his former idol and appealed, before Europe, to the tribunal of the French Academy to defend Sophocles, Corneille, Racine, and, last but not least, Voltaire, against the invasion of "Gilles Shakespeare and Pierrot Letourneur." The episode is one of great interest, and has an important bearing in the formation of an estimate of Voltaire, both from a literary and from a moral point of view. But, before narrating the episode itself, we must consider what was the exact standing of Shakespeare in France before Voltaire's time.

The first Frenchman who mentions Shakespeare's name was Saint-Evremond. This gentleman, who lived in England for forty years, never took the trouble to learn English, and yet we learn from Des Maizeaux that the principal theme of those interminable conversations that he used to have with his friends Buckingham, D'Aubigny, Cowley, and Waller—but especially with the two men whose names are first mentioned—turned principally on the drama. Buckingham and D'Aubigny translated and explained to him the masterpieces of the time, and he even wrote in collaboration with them a comedy in French, *à la manière des Anglais*, entitled *Sir Politick would be*. It was thus that he was enabled to speak of Shakespeare's *Henry VIII.*, which he saw played at Newmarket, of Heywood's *Queen Elizabeth*, of Shadwell's *Epsom Wells*, of Otway's *Don Carlos*, and especially of Ben Jonson's *Bartholomew Fair*, *Cataline*, and *The Fall of Sejanus*. Speaking of English tragedy, Saint-Evremond says: "There are old English tragedies, like Jonson's *Cataline* and *Sejanus*, where much requires to be cut out; but with such pruning they might be made very fine. In all the other tragedies of that time you see nothing but shapeless and undigested material, a heap of confused events, without consideration of place or of time, without any regard for propriety. The eyes, greedy of the cruelty of the spectacle, want to see murders and bleeding bodies. To spare the horror by narration, as is done in France, is to deprive the people of the sight of what touches them most." Saint-Evremond,

nevertheless, thinks that the French err in the other extreme in admiring tragedies toned down to such a degree of propriety as to have no effect on the emotions. Saint-Evremond entirely approved of the variety of the English comedy, and he even goes so far as to institute a parallel between Molière and Ben Jonson, which is far from disadvantageous to the latter. The cursory remarks of Saint-Evremond are all the more important and interesting, as he represented in the seventeenth century the professional critic, such as we find him established from the following century onwards. In his short dissertations he puts forth views that are often just and always ingenious, and, while retaining his personal opinions, he displayed in his judgments rare qualities of moderation, sagacity, and finesse. Saint-Evremond's works were much read, and they doubtless had great influence in directing attention to English literature. Henceforward frequent traces of the influence of English writers on those of France may be found; in 1698 Lafosse produced the best tragedy, of the second order, of the century, *Manlius Capitolinus*, which was founded largely on Otway's *Venice Preserved*; Antoine Houdart de la Motte, who died in 1731, revived the old quarrel between the ancients and moderns, and anticipated, in his numerous polemical writings, the theories of the romantic school of 1827. His references to the traditions of the English stage are frequent. Jeremy Collier's *Ancient and Modern Stage Surveyed* was translated by the Père Courbeville in 1715. Abel Boyer, the Huguenot, who died in England in 1729, wrote in his excellent *Grammaire Française et Anglaise*: "Il y a du Sophocle et de l'Eschyle dans Shakespeare." Destouches, who lived in London, on a mission from the Regent, between the years 1717 and 1723, translated several verses of Shakespeare's *Tempest*, under the title of *La Tempête*; his play *Le Dissipateur* is founded, to a certain extent, on *Timon of Athens*; and another of his pieces, *Le Tambour nocturne*, is taken directly from a play of Addison. These indications prove that English literature was attracting some attention in France, and that the name of Shakespeare was not unknown. Indeed, the admiration of Shakespeare was becoming fashionable, and the *ne plus ultra* of Anglomania. We find, in a comedy entitled *La Frivolité*, a marquis, who is mentioned thus:—

Son transport l'autre jour était l'Anglomanie,
 Au-dessus de Corneille il mettait Shakespeare.

Voltaire went to England at the end of August, in the year 1726. He remained in London and in the environs no less than three years, studying with ardour and thoroughness the language, the history, the literature, and the philosophy of the country. Before becoming a voluntary exile, Voltaire, then at the age of twenty-four, had produced with success his tragedy of *Œdipe*, which at once caused him to be accepted, in the eyes of his contemporaries, as a rival of Corneille and Racine in the imitation of antiquity. *Œdipe* was a tragedy written in the old

style, and was produced at a time when the French stage gave birth only to feeble copies of the two great masters, and when the glorious age of Louis XIV. was just flaring out with a lurid but clouded brilliancy. In *Œdipe* Voltaire's genius was just as much imprisoned and hampered by the Aristotelian unities and the courtly traditions of the French stage as had been that of Corneille or Racine. It was an elegant, cold, and uninteresting piece. I do not say that Voltaire would have remained a mediocre tragic writer had it not been for the incident which caused him to absent himself from Paris. But no one will, I think, question the fact that his residence of three years at London had an incalculable influence on his mind, "excessively sensitive from infancy," as he himself tells us, "to everything that bore the stamp of genius." Accustomed as he was to the conventional and cramped tragedy of the age of Louis XIV., and yet of an innovating and audacious turn of mind, Voltaire must have found a fruitful subject of study and observation in the bold and striking beauties of our English stage. Still, this innovator who attacked, criticised, and overturned everything, who accomplished a social revolution, who sapped even the religious convictions of his age, whose whole life, in short, was one of conflict and controversy, did not dare to revolutionise the stage. He hesitated, and remained wrapped up in the dignified and polished traditions of the Court of the Grand Monarque. The works of Shakespeare affected him deeply, but their influence was very largely counterbalanced by the old ideas and traditions, from which he had been unable or unwilling to free himself. Art cannot be modified so easily or so quickly as political institutions. The conventional tragedy had existed in France for two hundred years, and had become deeply rooted in the habits and ideas of the people. Nothing could be more conventional than the Court of Louis XIV.: the ladies and the red-heeled marquises were conventional; their dress, their manners, their gestures, the very tone of their voice, were conventional; even their beauty, like their flowing wigs, was not the product of nature, but of the cosmetic art. How then should they have been able to appreciate the bold and sublime conceptions of Shakespeare, too vast and too soaring to be confined within the narrow limits of the exquisite and elaborate art of Racine? It was useless to present to a public whose minds and manners were steeped in fastidious ideas, works which were not fastidious. In a famous discourse on tragedy, prefixed to his *Brutus*, Voltaire writes: "Our excessive delicacy forces us at times to put into the form of a narrative that which we should have wished to exhibit before the eyes of the public. We fear to risk new spectacles on the stage, before a nation accustomed to turn into ridicule everything which is not usual." There was, in fact, no chance of reforming the affected and conventional taste of the grand seigneurs who flaunted and flourished under the Regency and under Louis XV. What can be expected when we remember the fierce opposition which was offered to the new ideas in 1827? And yet Ducis, Letourneur, Diderot, Mercier,

Sedaine, Lemercier, and Delavigne had then already lived and written ; the Revolution of 1789 had made a clean sweep of old landmarks, and still the Romanticists had a terribly hard fight.

It is our boast that Shakespeare is universal, although in form he is national and mediæval. Still the depth of his thoughts, taken, so to speak, out of the common treasure of humanity, will have more attraction and empire, and will more readily strike a responsive chord, the less it finds minds disciplined to the yoke of established forms and social conventions. It was on this principle that the French critic Villemain said that Shakespeare would please even more in America than in England, and more in modern France than he could in old France, dominated as it was by the influence and ideas of the Court and of the Academy. We might even say in a general way, that the more the democratic element enters into the manners of a people, the less Shakespeare will jar and astonish. It is quite intelligible that for a mind that would be charmed by the pompous and precise regularity of Versailles, and by the pleasures of the ingenious and polished Court of Louis XIV., the crudity, the violence, and the realism of Shakespeare's matter and language would have something revolting. For such a mind Homer and Æschylus would be equally revolting, and we can hardly imagine the elegant society of the Court of Louis XIV. or the wits and philosophers of the eighteenth century witnessing a representation of the *Eumenides* of the latter poet. But we must not therefore conclude that the works of Homer or Æschylus have not durable beauties which can be appreciated by that imagination which renders itself contemporary with all epochs. It is well to bear these facts and circumstances in mind when we are considering both the influence of Shakespeare on Voltaire, and the reaction of Voltaire against Shakespeare.

Voltaire returned to France in 1729. The same year he published a new edition of his tragedy *Œdipe*, with a preface, in which he undertook to refute the ideas of Lamotte, whom we have mentioned above as having anticipated in theory the modern Romantic drama. Voltaire warmly defended the three unities ; but it is very clear that he was arguing from a limited point of view, and from a foregone conclusion. It was probably not merely the influence of prejudice and habit that induced Voltaire to defend these antiquated rules ; he was already ambitious of literary royalty ; opposition and controversy were his life, and as Lamotte was a member of the Academy, and a very considerable figure at that time, Voltaire felt himself bound to oppose him. However excellent Lamotte's reasoning may have been, there was a *raison d'état* for crushing him. Throughout the literary incident with which we are concerned we shall see that vanity was, to a great extent, the main-spring of Voltaire's attitude. He could not abide pretenders to literary glory, which might tend to lessen or to rival the brightness of his own. Often it happened that solid literary reputations were

smothered and overwhelmed with undeserved obloquy by the tyranny of *le roi Voltaire*.

Voltaire brought back with him from England the sketch of his tragedy of *Brutus*, inspired partly by Shakespeare and partly by Addison. It was finished and played December 11, 1730. The influence of the author's studies in England is evident in the greater freedom and animation in the action, and in the comparative complication and pomp of the scenery. In the first act the scene represents a part of the house of the consuls on the Tarpeian rock, and in the background the Capitol is seen. The senators are assembled between the temple and the house, in front of the altar of Mars. Brutus and Valerius Publicola, the consuls, preside over the assembly; the senators are arranged in a semicircle, and the lictors, with their fasces, stand behind them. Such are the stage directions that Voltaire gives, and reference to any classical tragedy of that time will show how great the innovation was on the mere material side. It would be exaggeration to say that *Brutus* is still a readable tragedy; but it is far beyond Voltaire's other works in boldness and vivacity. The enthusiasm with which he had been inspired by the English stage was still fresh, and he may, for the moment, have thought of introducing in France something of what he had seen in England. In the preface, addressed to his friend and protector Bolingbroke, he relates that during his stay in England he wrote out the first act in English prose almost word for word as it now appears in French verse. He then goes on to complain of the fetters of rhyme, which, however, he adds, is necessary to French verse. "Whosoever," he says, "should try to shake off a burden that the great Corneille bore, would be rightly regarded not as a bold genius opening up a new road, but as a very weak man who cannot walk in the old course." Further he expresses his desire to transport on to the French stage certain beauties of the English. "It is true, and I admit it, that the English stage is very faulty. I have heard from your own lips that you had not a single good tragedy; but, on the other hand, you have admirable scenes in your monstrous pieces. Hitherto almost all your tragic authors have been wanting in that purity, that regularity of action, that propriety of plot and of style, that elegance and artistic finish, which have been the glory of the French stage since Corneille; but your most irregular pieces have one great merit, that of action." In the same remarkable discourse Voltaire examines Shakespeare's *Julius Cæsar*. "With what pleasure," he exclaims, "did I see at London your tragedy of *Julius Cæsar*, which has been for one hundred and fifty years the delight of your nation! I do not assuredly commend the barbarous irregularities in which it abounds; it is only astonishing that they are not more in a work composed in an age of ignorance by a man who did not know Latin, and whose only master was his genius. But in the midst of so many gross faults, with what rapture I beheld Brutus, still holding in his hand the dagger reeking with Cæsar's blood, assemble the Roman people and speak to them from the

tribune . . .” Voltaire, continuing his examination, doubts very much whether the elegant and beribboned gentlemen, whom fashion then allowed to encumber the stage by their presence to such a degree as to render action in a piece almost impracticable, would have tolerated a chorus of artisans, much less the bleeding body of Cæsar. It may be remembered that Voltaire never ceased to protest against the presence of spectators on the stage, until the custom, so oft represented in old prints and frequently referred to by Molière, was abolished in 1760, and since that time the footlights have formed a sacred boundary between the public and the actors.

Brutus is far from being a realisation of all the excellent principles and reforms laid down by Voltaire in his admirable discourse; but the mere fact of his having admitted and conceived them at all is interesting for our present purpose.

Fifteen months later (March 7, 1732), Voltaire produced the tragedy of *Eryphile*, in which certain details were copied from *Hamlet*. In the fourth act the ghost of Amphiaræus is brought in, but Voltaire, either from hesitation or from his desire to correct the art of Shakespeare, has obtained but little effect from the apparition, and the play itself is cold and cramped, and was, moreover, a failure. Nevertheless, Voltaire could not forget the sublime and striking effects that Shakespeare had obtained, and we shall again find the apparition brought in as the spectre of Ninus in *Semiramis*. There are further resemblances between the situations of *Eryphile* and those of *Hamlet* upon which we need not dwell. It suffices for us to record the intention and to note the progress made by Voltaire.

Nothing daunted, Voltaire produced in August of the same year his masterpiece, *Zaïre*, the “pièce enchanteresse,” as Rousseau called it, the happiest inspiration of a genius which was not made for perfection. The chief point for us to notice in this play is the introduction of French historical personages on the stage. This innovation was the first step towards the creation of the historical tragedy which became purely national tragedy in *Adélaïde du Guesclin*, *Le Duc de Foix*, and *Tancrède*. This was a great event in French dramatic history, and one entirely due to the example of the English stage. In his Epistle Dedicatory, Voltaire writes: “It seems to me that this novelty might be the source of a kind of tragedy which has hitherto been unknown amongst us, and of which we have great need.” In the second epistle to Mr. Falkener, placed at the head of *Zaïre*, Voltaire takes occasion to declare that “passion ought to speak true language;” that “the art of pleasing seems to be the art of the French, and the art of thinking that of the English,” and that in *Zaïre* he had first dared to give full scope to his own sensibility. The plot of *Zaïre*, traced on that of *Othello*, is too well known to need being retold here; *Zaïre* is almost the only piece of Voltaire that is still read and played.

We have one more piece to notice, *Adélaïde du Guesclin*, which was

produced in 1734. The play was hissed from the very first act; the hisses became more violent at the second act, when the Duc de Nemours came in wounded and with his arm in a sling; the outcry was still louder at the fifth act, when the firing of a cannon, the signal ordered by the Duc de Vendôme, was heard; and when at the end the Duc de Vendôme said, "Es-tu content, Coucy?" a wit in the *parterre* replied, "Couci-couci" (so-so). *Adélaïde du Guesclin* is a very fair historical tragedy, with a strong plot and many striking situations, but it was full of innovations to which the public was not yet accustomed. Voltaire was now going too fast for his audience in the path of reform. In 1752 he rewrote the piece and toned it down very much, "par respect pour le ridicule," as he says, and it was played with considerable success. In 1765 the original piece, as it had been played in 1734, was revived, and Voltaire was surprised to hear that it was received with applause. Indeed, the very passages and scenes that had been most hissed in 1734 were most loudly applauded in 1765. This fact may be taken as an indication that the public was gradually beginning to accept and desire those reforms which had been at first scarcely tolerated. The history of this tragedy gives the measure of the progress made by dramatic reform during a period of thirty years between 1734 and 1765.

Meanwhile Voltaire had written and published his famous *Lettres philosophiques*, or *Lettres sur les Anglais* (Rouen, 1731), in which he exercised his wonderful clearness of intellect in making known the philosophy and literature of England, and his matchless irony and verve in attacking the various Christian sects and revelation itself with an audacity till then unknown. It was in vain that the volumes were burnt by the public executioner, that Voltaire's liberty was endangered, and that the publisher of the book was thrown into the Bastille and deprived of his privilege. In lighting the pyre to burn up the tomes of the *Lettres sur les Anglais*, the executioner was unconsciously helping to start that general conflagration which we call the French Revolution. It was in June 1734 that Voltaire's book was burnt. Two years previously he had written his tragedy *La Mort de César*, in which he had endeavoured to improve upon Shakespeare's play on the same subject. The piece was clandestinely printed in 1735, but Voltaire's innovations in literature and in philosophy had raised such a storm of opposition and persecution that the piece could not be played till 1743. With the philosophical and religious portions of the *Lettres sur les Anglais* we are not concerned, and the reader need not be troubled with a multitude of extracts even on the literary side. A single extract from *Lettre XVIII.* will suffice to give us a fairly correct idea of Voltaire's general estimate of Shakespeare:—

Shakespeare's genius was full of force, fertility, naturalness and sublimity, without the slightest spark of good taste, and without the slightest knowledge of the rules. I will tell you something bold but true: it is the merit of this author that has ruined the English stage; there are passages so grand and so terrible scattered throughout his monstrous farces (*ses farces monstrueuses*), which are called tragedies, that his

pieces have always been played with great success. Time, which alone makes the reputation of men at last, renders their faults respectable. . . . You will doubtless complain that those who have hitherto spoken of the English stage, and above all of this famous Shakespeare, have only shown up his errors, and that no one has translated any of those striking passages which of themselves ask pardon for all his faults. I reply that it is easy to present in prose the stupidities of a poet, but it is very difficult to translate his fine verses.

Voltaire then translates very admirably the famous monologue of *Hamlet*, "To be or not to be, that is the question . . ." and a fragment of Dryden's *Don Sebastien*.

Voltaire's *Lettres sur les Anglais*, together with his prefaces and imitations, had done their work. Public attention had been awakened, and France had become conscious that there were things curious and admirable beyond her own boundaries. Henceforward the reform movement declared itself openly and frankly. English literature became a famous study, and Anglomania a fashion daily increasing in extent. We have seen Voltaire in the ardour of his youth going too fast for the public; we shall now see the public going too fast for Voltaire. Little by little the innovations of the author of *Zaïre* began to bear fruit, and the enthusiasm for Shakespeare became a passion. The first translation of his works appeared in 1745 in *Le Théâtre Anglais* (Paris, 1745, in 12mo). There was no author's or printer's name on the title-page, but it was no secret that the translation was by De la Place, whose *Venise sauvée*, imitated from Otway's play of the same name, was performed at the Théâtre Français in 1747. The publication of this work was continued until 1748, and it met with entire success. The enterprise was bold and new, and De la Place thinks himself bound to make some apology for his audacity. He finds encouragement, he says, in the taste that educated Frenchmen have contracted, with so much eagerness, for the English language and literature. He does not try to conceal the difficulties of translation, but he still thinks the attempt possible. He begins with Shakespeare because "this poet is to be regarded as the inventor of dramatic art in England." "I read and meditated his works with attention," the translator writes, "and I felt that in making them known I should perhaps diminish the reputation of the author, if his faults were alone remarked without any regard to the differences of time, manners, and usages, and if he were judged merely according to the *Poetics* of Aristotle. . . . It matters little that Shakespeare worked in a manner different from our own; that very fact should be a reason for our increased curiosity. . . . Such an examination can only tend to the perfection of art. . . . French *esprit* must not necessarily be that of all nations; and in reading Shakespeare we shall discover not only the differences between the French and the English genius, but also traits of force and new and original beauties." De la Place recognises in Shakespeare the qualities of the artist, the philosopher, and the comedian; he qualifies him as "a great man who

studied the character and genius of his nation. . . . Never did poet have a more complete and extended empire over the passions. He excites them and calms them at will. He leads us to his end without preparation, and without letting us see it. Our heart is touched, our eyes are filled with tears, and that, too, always just at the moment that he chooses. . . . It is not less extraordinary to see this same man commanding passions of an exactly opposite nature. The different weaknesses of men are painted by him with a touch as fine and amusing as his treatment of the vices is majestic and terrible. He excels no less in the coolness of reflection and reasoning than in the warmth of emotion. His maxims and sentiments are not only judicious and appropriate, but they display a peculiar fineness of discernment. This latter talent is all the more admirable in a man without experience of the world and without distinct knowledge of those great scenes of human life which nevertheless formed the continual food of his meditations. He seems to have known what is called the world only by a kind of inspiration. The veil of nature was lifted before his glance, and we recognise in reading his works that he was not less a great philosopher than he was a great poet."

This was indeed vigorous and bold language, and never before had the praise of Shakespeare been sounded so loud or his banner borne so high in France. The fact that people listened to it and encouraged De la Place to continue his labours, is a remarkable evidence both of Voltaire's influence and of the progress of the literary taste of the country.

The chief and constantly repeated complaints made by the French critics against Shakespeare were his too frequent scenes of blood, his numerous changes of place and scene, and his variations of style to suit the character of the personages brought upon the stage. De la Place defends Shakespeare against each and all of these criticisms, fearlessly and without any attempt at compromise. "These liberties," he says, "which will lay Shakespeare open to the criticism of the French, do not appear to be contrary to the laws of nature or of reason, nor to that truth of sentiment which brings them all into harmony. Let us then beware of condemning irrevocably what our grandchildren will perhaps one day applaud."

The sentiments with which De la Place was animated are worthy of all praise; his translation is more open to criticism. He had taken for his motto *Non verbum reddere verbo*, and he might conscientiously have boasted that he had rigorously kept his promise. His translation is a curious mixture of prose and verse; he often omits whole scenes, or merely analyses them and gives extracts. Important features are passed over, and Shakespeare's thoughts and words are often distorted. Finally, both the prose and the verse are very rough. Still the work rendered eminent service to art and literature, and helped on the dramatic reform that was then in preparation. The first two volumes of the *Théâtre*

Anglais contained the discourse on the English stage from which we have given extracts, *Othello*, *Henry VI.*, *Richard III.*, *Hamlet*, and *Macbeth*. The third volume contained replies to critics, *Cymbeline*, *Julius Cæsar*, *Antony and Cleopatra*, *Timon of Athens*, and the *Merry Wives of Windsor*. The succeeding volumes contained analyses of the twenty-six remaining plays, together with translations of some of the pieces of Otway, Ben Jonson, and Beaumont and Fletcher.

Henceforward the reform movement declared itself openly, and translations of English plays and English books began to abound. The bibliography of this period of the eighteenth century would alone form an interesting volume. In order to give some idea of the progress made, we need only to quote a few typical instances. In 1747, the celebrated President of the Parliament of Paris, François Hénault, produced an historical tragedy or drama entitled *François II.*, in the preface to which the President avows his intense admiration for Shakespeare, and declares that his drama was inspired by Shakespeare, and more especially by *Henry VI.* I have used the word drama, although really it had not yet been adopted in the theatrical vocabulary. The regular tradition of the French stage was, it is true, interrupted about this time by the introduction of the *comédie larmoyante* or *tragédie bourgeoise*, and the Abbé Desfontaines, a prominent critic, had proposed another definition. "Why," he asked, "do we not employ for pieces of this kind which are neither tragic nor comic, and are yet adapted to the stage, a word which exists in our language and which we have borrowed from the ancients, I mean the word drama?" When once the word was pronounced the thing grew up. La Chaussée is generally credited with the invention of this kind of piece; Voltaire, as we have seen, tried his hand at it; Diderot wrote the *Père de Famille* and the *Fils Naturel*; Mercier acknowledged no theatrical pieces but dramas; and Beaumarchais soon followed and developed the drama in his play of *Eugénie*. Imitations, more or less direct, of English works are abundant. We may mention Saurin's *Beverley*, imitated from Lillo's *George Barnwell* (1768), and *Blanche et Guiscard* from Thompson's *Tancred* (1763), De Belloy's *Siège de Calais*, played before the Court in 1765; Barthe's comedy *Les Fausses Infidélités* (1768), founded upon *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and *Le Mariage Clandestin* (1775), imitated from the English of Garrick. Sedaine's *Philosophe sans le savoir*, likewise, shows strong Shakespearian influence. The English prose works that were translated and talked of at this time are innumerable. In fact, towards the end of the eighteenth century, France became exceedingly curious about foreign literature, and, thanks to the introduction of Voltaire, this curiosity was mainly concentrated upon Shakespeare. The great question of literary criticism at this period was as to the worth of Shakespeare, and the extent to which he ought to be admired and imitated.

Voltaire, partly from the influence of old training, and partly because he saw his literary supremacy threatened, did not look with

unmixed satisfaction upon the movement. He saw the success of the rough translation of *La Place*, and, after writing his *Mort de César*, he stopped short. He thought, perhaps, that he had said too much, and began to qualify his glorification of England and of things English; but, though he repressed his enthusiasm, he none the less continued to borrow without acknowledgment from English literature. The triumph of Romanticism was henceforward only a question of time; after the great political revolution it would be the turn of the literary revolution. But Voltaire, finding that the public had listened to him only too well, and that they were carrying his flag too far ahead—so far, indeed, as no longer to have the air of being his soldiers—threw himself into the opposite scale. He felt that his royalty was being undermined, and that he was no longer at the head of his age and of his contemporaries. Trusting, therefore, to the power of his name and to his unparalleled literary glory, he determined to oppose the popular rush single-handed.

On many occasions Voltaire published polemical pamphlets under a pseudonym, so that he might have full liberty to praise his own works. It was thus that he began his reactionary campaign against Shakespeare, by a pamphlet, *Des Théâtres Anglais*, purporting to come from the pen of Jérôme Carré, which was circulated in Paris in the year 1761. In this pamphlet Voltaire proposes to constitute a tribunal of the nations to decide between the merits of the French and English stage, on the issue raised by the judgment of Pope, who placed Shakespeare above Corneille, and that of Johnson, who ranked Otway above Racine. Voltaire then takes *Hamlet*, as being the best known of Shakespeare's pieces, and gives a lengthy analysis of the plot. His method, however, is remarkable neither for justice nor for good faith. He turns everything in *Hamlet* to ridicule, and purposely dwells upon the coarse terms and takes no notice of the beauties. After having garbled and misrepresented the play entirely, he says in conclusion: "Such is *exactly* the famous tragedy of *Hamlet*, the masterpiece of the London stage; such is the work that people prefer to *Cinna*." The marvels of the plot he attributes wholly to Saxo Grammaticus, whose romances *Claudius*, *Gertrude*, and *Hamlet*, Shakespeare, according to Voltaire, simply put into dialogue. As for the question why such a work could be popular in England, he says: "The chairmen, sailors, coachmen, shopboys, and clerks passionately love shows; give them cock-fights, bull-baiting, duels, gibbets, ghosts, or sorcery, and they will rush in crowds, and there is more than one great lord quite as curious as the populace. The citizens of London found in the tragedies of Shakespeare all that could please the curious. The Court was obliged to follow the people. During one hundred and fifty years there was nothing better; the admiration grew stronger and stronger until it became idolatry. A few traits of genius, a few happy verses, strong and natural, earned the acceptance of the rest, and soon the whole piece succeeded by the help of a few beauties of detail." In

conclusion, Voltaire asks if it is by his ignorance of the rules or by the indecency of his personages that Shakespeare has the advantage over Corneille. After this malignant valedictory shaft, he says, with profound self-satisfaction : " The reader is now in a position to judge the case between the tragedy of London and the tragedy of Paris."

The allusions to Shakespeare in Voltaire's letters might be quoted in abundance, and their asperity will be found to go on increasing until it culminates in the famous letters to the Academy on the occasion of the publication of Letourneur's translation. In a letter to Duclos (Dec. 25, 1761) he inveighs against the appearance of the witches in *Macbeth*. In June 1762 he writes to Duclos : " Shakespeare, qu'on oppose à Corneille, c'est Madame Gigogne qu'on met à côté de Mademoiselle Clairon." In August of the same year, in a letter to the Comte d'Argental, he characterises De la Place's translation as an " excès énorme d'extravagance." He asks D'Alembert what the Academy had thought of his *Jules César*, and D'Alembert replies (Sept. 8, 1762) : " The Academy read with pleasure your translation of *Julius Cæsar*. . . . For my part, I can hardly believe that, in certain passages, the original is as bad as it appears in this translation. . . ." In 1765 (Dec. 4), he once more bursts out against Shakespeare : " As for the English, I cannot be ungrateful to you for having ridiculed Gilles Shakespeare : he was a savage who had some imagination ; he wrote many happy verses, but his pieces are incapable of pleasing except at London and in Canada. It is not a good sign for the taste of a nation when that which it admires succeeds only in its native land." The reaction against Shakespeare gradually warms into a passion. The field offered by private letters, by pamphlets, and by the stage is not large enough ; he must carry on the struggle in his commentaries on Corneille, in his novels and tales, in his philosophical works, and even in his speeches. In the article on " L'Art Dramatique " in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, probably dating from 1765, he expresses his surprise that pieces like *Antony and Cleopatra*, in which the base populace figures side by side with princes, could have been played before the Court. " The Italians, the French, the men of letters of all other countries who have not lived some time in England, take Shakespeare for a mere ' Gilles de la Foire,' a *farceur* very much below Arlequin, for the most wretched buffoon that ever amused the populace. It is, however, in this same man that we find passages that raise the imagination and penetrate the heart. It is truth, it is nature herself, speaking her own language, without any admixture of art. . . ." Voltaire was here bold enough to be inconsistent. He had seen beauties in Shakespeare, and he saw them still, but his literary royalty was endangered, and he was obliged to depreciate his rival on principle. In the article " Goût " in the same work, Voltaire declares that Corneille in his worst moments never falls so low as Shakespeare. There is also a cutting allusion under the word " Baiser," which the curious will look up for themselves.

The references in the novels and tales are numerous. At the end of the second chapter of the *Ingénu* he explains why classical tragedies do not succeed in England, while "the coarse works" of Shakespeare are constantly applauded. The reason is, he says, that the public is not a judge of fine verses, and so Addison's *Cato* fell, and "the empire of Shakespeare is growing stronger."

Feeling, perhaps, that he was going too far, Voltaire endeavoured to excuse and diminish the severity of his attacks in a letter to Horace Walpole, dated July 15, 1768. The philosopher of Ferney then wrote :

You have almost made your nation believe that I despise Shakespeare. I was the first to make him known to the French ; forty years ago I translated some passages from his works, as also from those of Milton, Waller, Rochester, Dryden, and Pope. I can assure you that before me no one in France knew anything about English poetry. . . . For thirty years I was persecuted by a swarm of fanatics. . . . I said a long time ago that if Shakespeare had come into the world in Addison's age, his genius would have possessed that elegance and purity which render Addison so worthy of commendation. I said that his genius was his own, and that his faults were those of his age. In my opinion he is precisely like Lope de Vega and Calderon. His was a fine nature, but utterly uncultivated. He had no regularity, no sense of propriety, no art ; lowness and grandeur, buffoonery and sublimity, are found in his works side by side ; his tragedy is a chaos in which there are a hundred *traits de lumière*.

The following year he wrote to Chamfort à propos of the Stratford Jubilee (September 27, 1769) : "Genius is not encouraged in France with such profusion."

This letter to Horace Walpole was soon forgotten and soon contradicted. The publication of Letourneur's translation in 1776 brought the indignation of the inconstant Voltaire to a height. Compromise was henceforward out of the question. In the terrific tournament that was about to take place one of the champions must remain on the field. Some idea of the great fermentation and excitement that was caused by this translation of Shakespeare's works, and the discussions to which it led, may be formed from the fact that Grimm gravely expresses his fears lest the patriotic resentment of M. de Voltaire should trouble the precious harmony that had long existed between England and France. For many years the most touching union had reigned between the rival and neighbouring nations. How close it had been in the literary world may be seen in the books and periodicals of the time, and amongst other indications of the intimacy and sympathy of the literary men of both nations, we may quote the private and foreign correspondence of David Garrick. On the material side, Anglomania and Gallomania were rife in the respective countries. The French borrowed their swords, their coaches, and their fashion of laying out gardens, from the English ; who in return appropriated the frills and furbelows of the French Court. In exchange for cooks and *perruquiers* we sent them philosophers. Our young lords ruined themselves on princesses of the Opera, while the

young French noblemen came over to our country and lost their money at Newmarket and Doncaster.

Letourneur's translation was published by subscription, and its appearance was looked forward to with impatience. It bears the title : *Shakespeare, traduit de l'Anglais, dédié au Roi* ; with the epigraph, *Homo sum, humani nihil à me alienum puto*.—TERENCE. It was illustrated by MM. le Bas, Lemure, Alliamet, Saint-Aubin, Prévôt, Chofart, and de Launay, and the plates were sold independently of the book. The authors of the enterprise were the Comte de Catuëlan, Letourneur, the translator of Young's *Night Thoughts*, once one of the most popular books in France, and Fontaine-Malherbe. Bad as it is, this translation was the most complete and faithful that had yet appeared. The translators, however, had very primitive ideas of fidelity of rendering, and they spoiled the delicate beauties of Shakespeare by declamation. In the prefaces Letourneur showed himself very disrespectful towards other geniuses not less powerful in their way, and not less pure than that of Shakespeare. He said, absurdly enough, that Shakespeare *had disdained to have taste*. Moreover he attacked with volleys of heavy epigrams the sustained dignity of the French stage, and consequently attacked by implication Voltaire himself. "It is a long time," wrote Grimm in his admirable correspondence, "since any work has appeared that has deserved more criticism and more praise, on which discussion has been more animated, and on which public opinion has been more divided and uncertain.

Those who, brought up from infancy in the fear and respect of our great models, render them that exclusive and superstitious worship which differs in no respect from theological intolerance, have looked upon the translators of Shakespeare as sacrilegious men who wished to introduce monstrous and barbarous divinities into the bosom of the fatherland. The devotees of Ferney could not witness without much ill-humour the appearance of a work which would show France the admirable skill with which M. de Voltaire has appropriated the beauties of Shakespeare, and the no less admirable bad faith with which he afterwards allowed himself to translate his works. Those who wanted to preserve an air of impartiality have rendered due justice to the finest genius of England, but have revenged themselves on the translators. The English, who were jealous of the glory of their stage, have complained that Shakespeare was translated too literally ; others found that the translation, though very exact in certain respects, was very unfaithful in others ; the majority would have been glad to have seen it more French. . . . This translation has not really had any success except in the eyes of those who did not know Shakespeare, and who were burning to become acquainted with him. These read and devoured the translation without troubling themselves as to whether they were reading English or French. It was thus, for instance, that M. Sedaine read it, and the result was that he remained for several days

in a kind of intoxication which it is difficult to describe, but easy to imagine, if one is at all acquainted with his turn of mind and his works."

Grimm's criticism of Letourneur's work is excellent, and there can be little doubt that if it had not been for its having been the occasion of Voltaire's scurrilous tirade, this translation would never have acquired a reputation which its literary merits do not justify. The first mention that Voltaire makes of it is in a letter to the Comte d'Argental, dated July 19, 1776, à propos of "un nommé Tournéur," as he calls him: "Have you read two volumes of that wretch in which he tries to make us consider Shakespeare as the only model of real tragedy? He calls him the *dieu du théâtre*. He sacrifices all Frenchmen without exception to his idol, just as of old they used to sacrifice pigs to Ceres. He does not deign even to mention Corneille or Racine. . . . There are already two volumes printed of this Shakespeare, which one would take for fair pieces written two hundred years ago. This scribbler has contrived to induce the King, the Queen, and the royal family to subscribe to his work. Have you read his abominable scrawl? Have you a hatred sufficiently vigorous for this impudent imbecile? Will you put up with the affront that he inflicts upon France? You and M. de Thibouville are too gentle. There are not in all France enough cuffs, enough dunce's caps, enough pillories for such a rogue. The blood dances in my old veins as I write to you about him. If he has not put you in a rage, I consider you a model of impassiveness. The dreadful point is that the monster has a party in France; and to crown the calamity and horror, it was I who first spoke of this Shakespeare; it was I who first showed to the French a few pearls that I had found in his enormous dunghheap. I little expected that I should one day help to tread under foot the crowns of Racine and Voltaire in order to adorn the brow of a barbarian player."

Nothing could appease the wrath of Voltaire; nothing could cool his ardour. In spite of sickness and age he rushed into the field to defend his tottering literary royalty against the imposing invasion of the giant Shakespeare. He resolved to make a supreme effort, and accordingly wrote two discourses for the tribune of the Academy. The day chosen for their delivery was August 25, 1776, the anniversary of St. Louis.

If we should read only these two speeches, we might readily believe that the author was animated by a sincere conviction; his correspondence, however, reveals the spurs of jealousy, passion, and *amour propre*, that pricked on the octogenarian warrior. In another letter to D'Argental, dated July 24, he writes: "My dear angel, the abomination of desolation is in the temple of the Lord. Lekain tells me that all the youth of Paris is in favour of Letourneur, that the English scaffolds and brothels are getting the better of the tragedies of Racine and the noble scenes of Corneille; that there is nothing great or decent at Paris except the Gilles of London; and that, in fine, a prose tragedy is about to

be represented in which there is a meeting of butchers that promises to have a marvellous effect. I have seen the end of reason and taste. I shall die leaving France barbarian; but, happily, you are living, and I flatter myself that the Queen will not leave her new country, of which she is the charm, a prey to savages and monsters. I flatter myself that M. le Maréchal de Duras will not have done us the honour to belong to the Academy in order to see us devoured by Hottentots. . . . I have sent a small treatise to the Academy." The treatise referred to became the famous *Lettres à l'Académie* which he announced to D'Alembert in a letter dated July 26, 1776: "Lisez mon factum contre mon ennemi, M. Letourneur."

Some of the passages of these letters appear to have been too violent, for on August 4 D'Alembert replied, advising Voltaire to moderate himself both in his citations and in his attacks against the translator. Voltaire himself was too ill to come and read his "factum," and so that duty fell upon his friend D'Alembert, to whom he wrote on August 10: "With regard to the turpitudes that it is necessary to make known to the public, and to the coarse words of the English mob which ought not to be heard at the Louvre, would it be a bad idea to skip the word in reading, and thus make the public wish that it had been pronounced, in order that the divine Shakespeare might have been seen in all his horror and incredible lowness? If it happens to be you who deign to read, you will manage to get out of the difficulty, which after all is piquant enough." A few days later he announces to M. de Vaines the forthcoming *séance* of the Academy: "On the 25th of this month, monsieur, I fight *en champ clos* under the standard of M. d'Alembert against Pierrot Letourneur, squire of Gilles Shakespeare. I repeat my prayer that you will be present at this fine feat of arms." The next day the indefatigable Voltaire again takes up the pen to excite La Harpe: "Courage! courage! My dear colleague. . . . M. d'Alembert and your other friends are, methinks, doing patriotic and meritorious work in daring to defend, in full Academy, Sophocles, Corneille, Euripides, and Racine against Gilles Shakespeare and Pierrot Letourneur. . . . My principal intention and the true aim of my work is to instruct the public thoroughly as to all the excess of infamous baseness which people dare to oppose to the majesty of our stage. It is clear that this infamy can only be made known by literally translating the rough words of the delicate Shakespeare. M. d'Alembert will not stop to utter these words before the ladies . . . but he can pause at the sacramental syllables . . . and thus give the public to understand that he dare not translate this decent Shakespeare in all his naked energy. I think that this reticence and this modesty will please the assembly, who will imagine much more malice than they will have heard."

This adroit manœuvre of Voltaire, who was more anxious about his own laurels than about those of Corneille and Racine, needs no qualification. It is obvious from the above quotations and from his correspondence on this subject in general, that he attached all the importance to the

faults and coarsenesses of Shakespeare, and never pretended to remark his beauties.

At last the great day came. In a significant letter written a day or two before the event D'Alembert wrote to Voltaire as follows: "At last, my dear master, the battle has begun, the signal has been given. Either Shakespeare or Racine must remain on the field. . . . I shall cry on Sunday as I mount to the charge, 'Vive Saint Denis Voltaire, et meure George Shakespeare!'"

In the first of these famous letters Voltaire characterises Shakespeare's pieces as monstrous farces; he expresses his indignation at the fact that such productions should have been translated and their author styled "divine." He goes on to state his task, which is to destroy the influence of Shakespeare; he employs all his efforts to demonstrate that this "god of tragedy," as he derisively names him, is full of vulgarity, abounding in coarseness, swarming with quolibets, Punch and Judy jokes, and porter's slang. These are Voltaire's own expressions. As for proofs, he picks out certain phrases and expressions and avoids passing any general judgment on Shakespeare's works. He takes *Macbeth*, *Othello*, and *Henry V.*, and quotes only those passages in which the populace, servants, or soldiers appear; and as Shakespeare was realist enough not to make all his characters speak the polished language of the Court, Voltaire has no difficulty in finding ground for his flippant sarcasm. What! Shakespeare a model? Shakespeare the perfecter of the dramatic art and the creator of the theatre in England? As for the old question of the unities, that had already been discussed between Voltaire and Lamotte; Saint Denis Voltaire can only give as a reason for maintaining them the fact that the Greeks and Italians observed them. In conclusion, he cries, proud and triumphant, "Judge now, courts of Europe, Academicians of all countries, well-educated men and men of taste in all countries! I will go even further and dare to ask justice of the Queen of France, of our princesses, of the daughter of so many heroes who know how heroes ought to speak." Such is the substance of the first letter. The second opens with these audacious words: "Messieurs, I have faithfully laid before your tribunal the subject of the quarrel between France and England. No one certainly respects more than I do the great men that that island has produced, and I have given enough proofs of my sentiments. The truth, which cannot be disguised from you, orders me to avow that this Shakespeare, wild and absurd as he was, had sparks of genius." Lope de Vega, who lived at the same epoch in Spain, was, he continues, like Shakespeare, a mixture of grandeur and extravagance. Voltaire then traces in language of studied moderation a sketch of the history of the stage in France and England, but soon the note of depreciation again predominates, and Shakespeare is placed on a level with Thespis. Still, fearing to go too far, Voltaire adds that "such was the genius of Shakespeare that this Thespis was sometimes a Sophocles." He ends by declaring that it lies with the Academy to

decide whether the French nation is to abandon the old classical path in order to see the stage polluted with the presence of murderers, porters, witches, buffoons, and drunken priests; whether the Court, that had been so long renowned for its politeness and taste, is to be changed into a beer-shop. This systematically prejudiced and depreciatory discourse ends with the following witty but inconclusive scene: "Imagine, messieurs, Louis XIV. in his gallery at Versailles, surrounded by his brilliant court; a Gilles, covered with rags, penetrates the crowd of heroes, great men, and beauties who compose that court; he proposes to them to abandon Corneille, Racine, and Molière for a mountebank who has happy sallies and who excels in contortions. How do you think that this offer would be received?"

The success of Voltaire's factum was of no slight importance. As D'Alembert had said, either Shakespeare or Racine must remain on the field. Voltaire's anxiety to know the result was accordingly very great. D'Alembert writes as follows in a letter dated August 27: "M. le Marquis de Villeville, my dear and illustrious master, was to have left for Ferney early yesterday morning: he intended to run a few post-horses to death in order to be the first to bring you the news of your success. It was all that you could desire. Your reflections gave much pleasure, and were very much applauded. . . . I need not tell you that the English who were there left very dissatisfied, and even a few Frenchmen who, not content with being beaten by land and by sea, wished that we should also be beaten on the stage. . . . I read your discourses with all the zeal and interest that the good cause inspires and, I may add, with all the interest of my vanity; for I was determined not to let this cannon miss fire when I undertook to put the fuse to it. I regret very much the slight omissions that had to be made in order to avoid scandalising devout people and the ladies; but what I was able to preserve raised much laughter and contributed largely, as I had hoped, to win the battle. . . ." Shakespeare, however, did not lack defenders, and the battle went on with more or less violence until Voltaire's death. Madame Necker wrote to Garrick in October 1776, informing him that Voltaire and some other French wits had taken advantage of his momentary retirement from the stage to endeavour to dethrone Shakespeare. "As for myself," she writes, "it is in vain that people try to show me errors of taste or even of judgment in this author. I always reply, 'You have only seen his corpse; I have seen him when the soul animated his body.'" After this elegant compliment to Garrick, Madame Necker adds that Mrs. Montagu had been kind enough to carry two pots of almond paste and a little bag of sweetmeats, which she took the liberty to present to Madame Garrick. Mrs. Elizabeth Montagu was, in all probability, present at the *séance* of the Academy when Voltaire's discourses were read, and she appears to have at once set to work to write her *Apology for Shakespeare*, which was translated into French and published at Paris in 1777. Mrs. Montagu's *Essay on the Genius of*

Shakespeare (published in 1769) had in some way been the occasion of Voltaire's letters to the Academy. The English writers have naturally many allusions to the controversy, and Fréron, the most obstinate and sarcastic critic of Voltaire, translates in his *Année Littéraire* (1769) a long article from the London *Evening Post*, entitled "Parallèle de Shakespeare et des poètes dramatiques grecs et français, avec quelques remarques sur les jugements faux portés par M. de Voltaire." This article itself might very well have come from the pen of Mrs. Montagu. The Chevalier Rutledge, an Irish officer in Fitzjames' regiment, author of the *Bureau d'Esprit*, a lively skit on Madame Geoffrin and her coterie, also took up the cudgels in the cause of Shakespeare, and wrote a pamphlet, entitled *Observations à Messieurs de l'Académie Française au sujet d'une lettre de M. de Voltaire* (Paris, 1776), which is not remarkable for its moderate and courteous tone, however good its reasoning may be. Another defender of Shakespeare was Joseph Baretti, who wrote a violent and badly-expressed *Discours sur Shakespeare et sur M. de Voltaire* (London: Nourse, 1777). This Baretti was a friend and correspondent of Garrick, Burke, and Johnson, who carried their friendship so far as to bear evidence as to his good character when he was tried and acquitted on a capital charge in consequence of a street brawl in which he had been involuntarily involved. He was secretary for the foreign correspondence of the Royal Academy and the author of an English-Italian dictionary which is still used. La Harpe, who was of course a classicist and a fair representative of the unreformed taste of that period, and at the same time a friend of Voltaire, calls Baretti a sort of madman (*une espèce de fou*). In one passage Baretti says that he would give one of his fingers to have written the single rôle of "Caliban" in the *Tempest*. "Ces sophismes," writes La Harpe, "de trois ou quatre énérgumènes qui s'efforcent de mettre leur Shakespeare au-dessus des Sophocles et des Euripides, des Corneille et des Racine, sont au nombre des extravagances de l'esprit humain."

Fréron sums up the merits of the case of Voltaire *v.* Shakespeare in his report of the *séance* of the Academy at which Voltaire's letter was read.* "Mais, en vérité, à quoi pense donc Monsieur d'Alembert? Auroit-il sérieusement pris à tâche de couvrir de ridicule mon pauvre ami de Ferney et de le faire siffler dans ses vieux jours?" "Such," writes Fréron, "was the reflection of a grave military man as he came out of the Academy after hearing this famous letter read. Indeed, sir, the gall, the indecency and the scurrility of this diatribe against Shakespeare are hardly to be pardoned to the old age of M. de Voltaire." Fréron attributes very justly Voltaire's bitterness to his wounded *amour-propre*. The Comte de Catuëlan, Letourneur, and Fontaine-Malherbe had dared to translate the works of Shakespeare and to write a preface of one hundred and thirty pages without saying a single

* *Année Littéraire*, 1776, vol. vi.

word in praise of Voltaire. The copy of the work destined for Ferney arrived without the usual literary passport. It was badly received ; the master of the château flew into a rage, rang violently for one of his secretaries, and dictated his diatribe on the spot. Grimm was more charitable, but perhaps not so near the truth, when he said that Voltaire had spoken evil of Shakespeare, after having been his admirer, in order to prevent others from attempting what they could not have done with such adroitness as he, and therefore he says, " C'est peut-être encore une très-bonne œuvre."

Whatever may have been Voltaire's motives, he remained firm in his new opinions about Shakespeare to his dying day. The English tourists and pilgrims who visited him at Ferney wasted their pains in trying to make the patriarch of letters modify his sentence on their national poet. " One night at Ferney," wrote Moore, " when the conversation turned upon the genius of Shakespeare, Voltaire declaimed against the impropriety and absurdity of introducing into tragedy vulgar characters and a low and crawling dialogue ; he cited several instances where our poet had offended against this rule, even in his most touching pieces. A gentleman of the company, a zealous admirer of Shakespeare, observed, while seeking to excuse our celebrated compatriot, that although his characters were taken from amongst the people, they were none the less taken from nature." Voltaire's reply might perhaps be thought coarse by modern ears. It suffices to say that it gave a reason for wearing breeches, and that it may be found in Moore's *View of Society and Manners in France, Switzerland, and Germany*.*

The eccentric Martin Sherlock, chaplain to the Bishop of Derry, paid a visit to Voltaire in April 1776, just before the curious incident that we have just been considering. He was not yet lashed into a state of fury by Letourneur's translation, and contented himself, as Sherlock puts it, " with saying many horrible things against Moses and Shakespeare." On another occasion, as they were visiting the library at Ferney, Sherlock, who was a bit of a tuft-hunter, flattered the patriarch by speaking to him of his aristocratic English acquaintances. Sherlock remarked casually that Lord Bolingbroke and Voltaire were at one on this point that the English had not a single good tragedy. " That is true," Voltaire replied ; " *Cato* is excellently written ; Addison had much taste, but the abyss between taste and genius is immense. Shakespeare had astonishing genius, but no taste ; he spoilt the taste of the nation ; he has been their taste for two hundred years ; and that which has been the taste of a nation for two hundred years will be their taste for two thousand : that taste becomes a religion, and there are in that country many fanatical worshippers of that author." In the same conversation Voltaire put, as clearly as it could be put, the real state of the question of the comparative merits of the English and French dramatic authors.

* London, 1779, vol. i. p. 275.

Sherlock observed that the English preferred Corneille to Racine. "That," replied Voltaire, "is because the English do not know enough of the French tongue to feel the beauties of the language of Racine and the harmony of his versification : Corneille pleases them more because he is more striking ; but Racine pleases the French because he has more sweetness and tenderness."

One day, in 1778, Voltaire and Diderot were discussing things in general at the Hôtel de Villette, the very house in which Voltaire died. Shortly afterwards the conversation turned upon Shakespeare. "Ah ! monsieur," exclaimed Voltaire violently, "can you prefer a monster devoid of taste to Virgil, to Racine ? I would as lief that we should abandon the Apollo Belvedere for the Saint-Christophe of Notre-Dame." Diderot remained discountenanced and embarrassed for a moment, then : "But what would you say, monsieur, if you saw that immense Saint-Christophe walking and coming forward in the streets with his limbs and colossal stature ?" This Saint-Christophe was a gigantic statue, a kind of colossus, that had been placed in the nave of Notre-Dame by Antoine des Essarts, chamberlain of Charles VII. It disappeared in 1784 before the Revolution broke out. We quote the words of Voltaire to show that he cherished his animosity against Shakespeare up to the very last, for he died on May 30, 1778. As for the comparison that Voltaire employed it was afterwards admirably worked up by Diderot, who said : "Moi, je ne comparerai Shakespeare ni à l'Apollon du Belvédère, ni au Gladiateur, ni à Antinoüs, ni à l'Hercule de Glycon, mais au Saint-Christophe de Notre-Dame, colosse informe, grossièrement sculpté, mais dans les jambes duquel nous passerions tous sans que notre front touchât ses parties honteuses."

A Persian Apologue.

(To E. H. P.)

MELEK the Sultán, tired and wan,
Nodded at noon on his divan.

Beside the fountain lingered near
JAMÍL the bard, and the vizier—

Old YÚSUF, cross and hard to please;
Then JAMÍL sang, in words like these.

*Slim is Butheina—slim is she
As boughs of the Aráka tree!*

“Nay,” quoth the other, teeth between,
“Lean, if you will—I call her lean.”

*Sweet is Butheina—sweet as wine,
With smiles that like red bubbles shine!*

“True,—by the Prophet!” YÚSUF said.
“She makes men wander in the head!”

*Dear is Butheina—ah! more dear
Than all the maidens of Kashmeer!*

“Dear,” came the answer, quick as thought,
“Dear . . and yet always to be bought.”

So JAMÍL ceased. But still Life's page
Shows diverse unto Youth and Age:

And, be the song of Ghouls or Gods,
Time, like the Sultán, sits . . and nods.

AUSTIN DOBSON.

A Grape from a Thorn.

BY JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER VI.

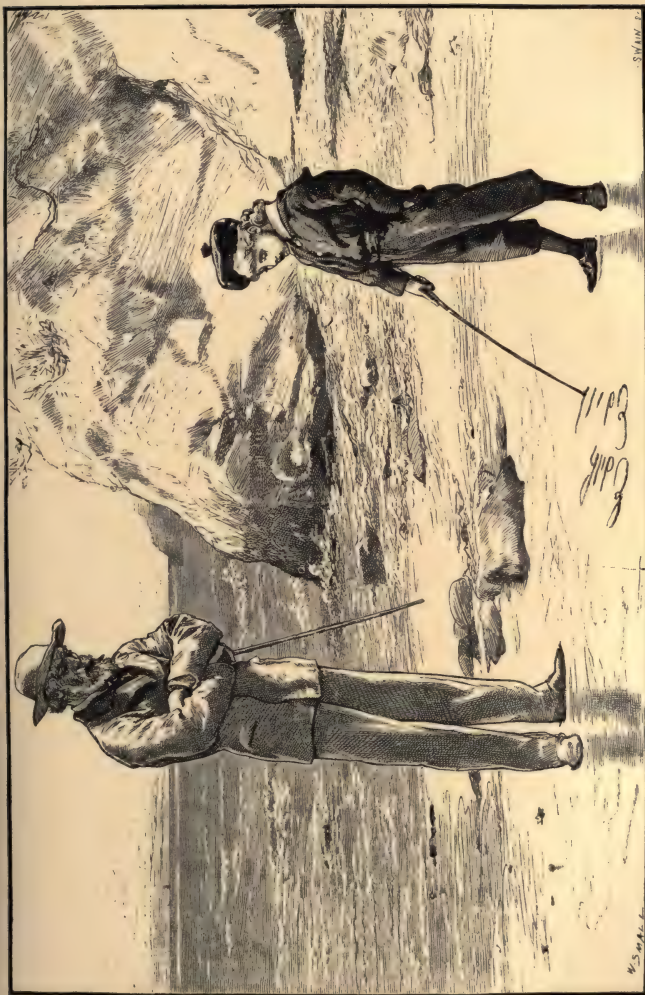
A HAZARDOUS DESCENT.



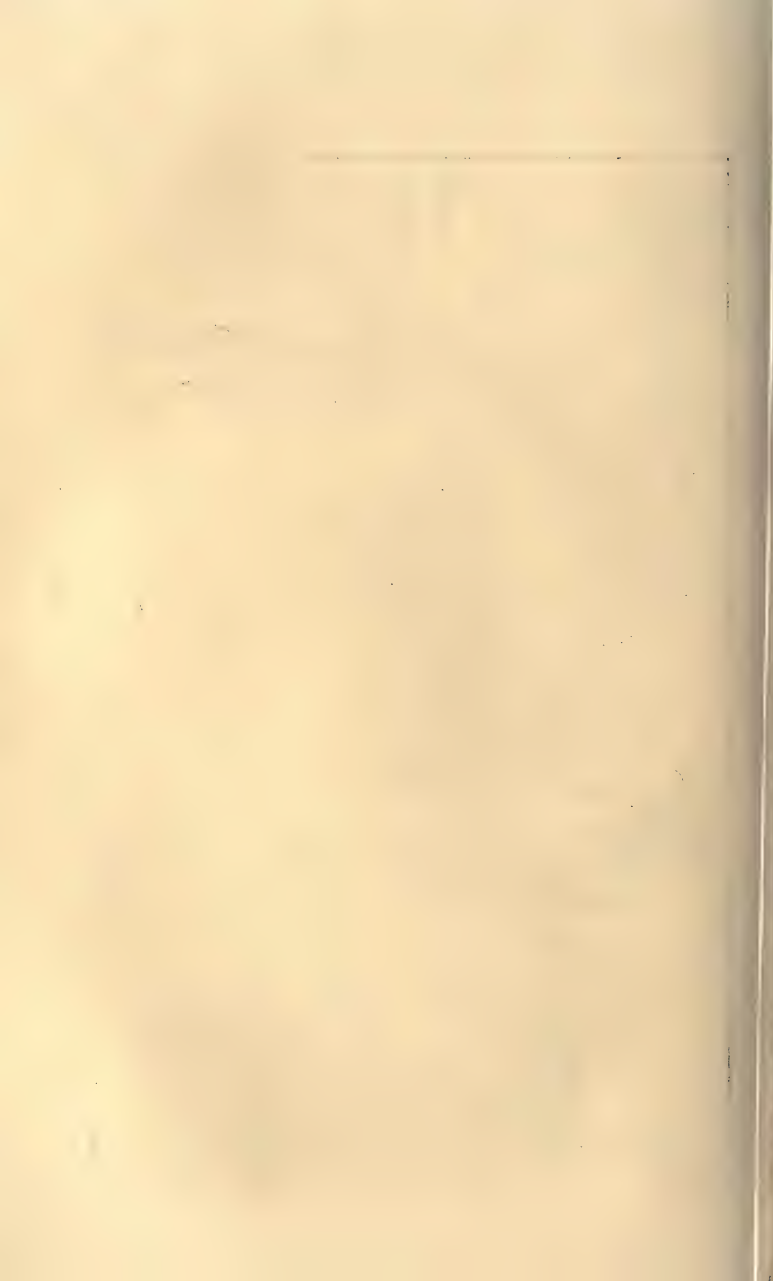
IT was soon made known to the guests at the *Ultramarine* that the Honourable George Emilius Josceline and his daughter would honour the *table d'hôte* with their presence; but what was by no means so certain, and was debated among the great powers with considerable energy and bitterness, was, where were they to sit? From the very earliest ages this question has always been a supreme one, and very much to my content; for when I read of the eminent specimens of huma-

nity who have made a point of this matter of precedence, and behold living ones concerning themselves about it, and reflect that I myself don't care one button where I sit, provided the chair is comfortable and not in a draught, I cannot but experience some sensation of superiority. To my mind, there are few things so curious as to see a lady arranging beforehand the position of her guests at the dinner-table, without the least regard to how A, as a neighbour, is likely to get on with B, but solely according to the great principles of *Debrett*: the effect of which is sometimes very curious.

"By Jove, sir," a great painter once confided to me, "if that wretched woman" (mentioning a hostess of considerable fashion) "did not send me down to dinner after a captain in a marching regiment, as though I had been a painter and glazier!"



A SACRED CONCLUSION TO THE LESSONS OF THE DAY.



These individual wrongs, as I told him, will sometimes be inflicted ; but social order in the general must be maintained, or where are we ? The person who has the most right to complain, on such occasions, is the master of the house, who, with a list of couples as long as that of the greyhounds at a coursing meeting crumpled up in his hand, walks about his drawing-room before dinner like a man with something heavy on his mind, and separates the most sociable pairs. "You mustn't take that girl, Plantagenet," he whispers ; "you must take Lady Dowdey." Then he shrinks into a corner, takes his list out again as though it were a writ he was about to serve upon his guests, and he very much ashamed of it, and extracts another sentence of separation.

In a private house, whatever perplexity and agony of mind are thus undergone by the master of it, the question of precedence is thus managed somehow, but at a *table d'hôte* matters are different. "Seniority," as a rule, prevails over the "nomination system," and those who have been longest at the hotel take the highest place at the board. It is far from analogous to the theory of the survival of the fittest, since in the case of the *Ultramarine* it might actually have happened through death, or a more fashionable sort of "departure," that such persons as Mr. and Mrs. Wallace should have found themselves at the top of the mahogany tree. Indeed, that very argument was made use of, with her accustomed directness, by Mrs. Armytage, when maintaining against Mrs. Jennynge that the new arrivals should sit at her own right hand. "They have a claim to it," she urged, "by social position ; whereas if you stick to the hotel regulations, they will have to sit below the Wallaces—a position obviously repulsive to one's sense of right."

But Mrs. Jennynge, who always shook when agitated, objected like a very aspen leaf ; she foresaw that with Mrs. Armytage on one side of them, and Mr. Felspar on the other, her daughter and herself would be cut off from all communication with the Joscelyns—a position of affairs she was by no means inclined to accede to.

"You want to keep them all to yourself, Mrs. Armytage," she said, with unwonted courage, "and we won't submit to it. What is your opinion, Mrs. Lott ?"

Mrs. Lott, whose place at dinner was at the lower end of the table, opined that the ordinary rules of the hotel should not be infringed.

"The rule of the hotel," said Mrs. Armytage, boldly, "is that all personal friends, even though they may not have arrived at the same time, sit next to one another at dinner, and the Joscelyns are *my* personal friends—that is, they have now become so."

"By adoption ?" inquired Miss Jennynge, stung to sarcasm.

"No, miss ; by community of ideas, and—and by equality of social position ; that is to say, though my husband's name may not be actually in the Peerage, his pre-eminence in the scientific world—— I beg your pardon, Miss Jennynge ; I did not catch your exceedingly courteous interruption."

"I said 'Rubbish,'" observed that young lady, calmly; and indeed Mrs. Armytage was very well aware that she had done so.

Then an idea entered that great woman's mind which could only have occurred to one with a genius for administration; she resolved, as other great rulers of mankind—such as emperors and kings—have done before her when oppressed by circumstances, namely, to remove the seat of government altogether.

"I'll tell you what I'll do," she said, with an air befitting the momentous character of her resolve; "I shall migrate to the bottom of the table, and sit with them *there*."

"A very good plan," observed Mrs. Lott, who would thus be brought into close proximity with the desired objects, "and one which will content all parties."

"If you go there you shall stop there!" cried Miss Jennynge, vehemently. "Mamma, remember you will henceforth take the head of the table."

This terrible threat was not without its effect upon Mrs. Armytage.

Pope Clement and his successors who removed from the Eternal City to Avignon, it will be remembered, did not stay very long there, and were glad enough to get back to Rome. And, supposing they had found the Vatican occupied by somebody else!

"Very good," said Mrs. Armytage, in a tone of quiet resignation, "then let matters run their own course."

From this, one would have imagined that she would have taken no further action in the affair; but she was not one of those diplomatists who advocate a masterly inaction, and let things slide. She put on her outdoor things, and sallied forth in the direction taken by the Professor. A husband's ear is doubtless the most fitting one in which a wife can confide her troubles; but then he must not have a bee (or a butterfly) in his bonnet. The erudition of Timothy Armytage, F.R.S. and V.P.R.S., had so absorbed, not to say corrupted, his brain, that he could no more understand the delicacies of a question of precedence than a schoolboy. After pursuing the cliff-path for a few hundred yards, she diverged into a quiet cove, where she knew Mr. Aird and Davey were usually to be found at that period of the afternoon. The descent was not easy for a lady of her build and stature; nor could little Davey have accomplished it but for the help of his father's hand, which never unclasped its hold till they reached the shore. They came hither for Davey's lessons in geography, history, and spelling, which were carried on in a singular manner. By no means from want of wits, but of opportunity, and from chronic ill health, the child was backward in his studies; which were pursued in summer time not in the ordinary fashion with books and slates at all, but in the open air. Mr. Aird drew maps, and figures, and words upon the silver sand with his walking-stick, and gave his lectures *sub Jove*, like a philosopher of old. Here the parallel would have ended—for the old Indian was by no means a philo-

sopher as to patience and temper—had not paternal love stepped in, and, out of very unpromising material, fashioned a most tender teacher. Davey, too, had his little stick, with which he journeyed over the four quarters of the globe—delaying most in Asia, where jungles and tigers do most abound, whereof his father had much to tell him; totted up vast sums in pounds, shillings, and pence; and cultivated literature. It was a pretty sight (save for those who can only recognise that beauty which is but skin deep) to see the sun-browned and withered man imparting to the child of his old age these rudiments of knowledge. The affection in the teacher's face was well understood by the pupil, but a certain grave anxiety that also lurked there was unintelligible to him. There were other reasons for that look of pain; but what was secretly gnawing at his father's heart was the presentiment that these immature fruits of the tree of knowledge were doomed never to ripen; that the boy himself had the seeds of early death in him. It was not solely because he was his only child that little Davey was his father's idol, but because he had a foreboding that he would at no distant date have only the memory of him to enshrine. It was the opinion of a great doctor he had consulted that his son had remained in India a year too long; a verdict bitterer than wormwood to him, since he himself had retained him there, partly because the lonely man could not bear to part with him, and partly because, in just twelve months, a large pension would become due, after which he could return home and dwell there. The home, however, was England and not Scotland, the climate of which was too severe for Davey.

On the afternoon in question, the pair, after going through their educational curriculum, had travelled together to the father's birthplace (a village which occupied, on their map, by the bye, a much larger space than that allotted to it by hydrographers), and were putting the usual finishing touch to their labours, which consisted in the formation of the word "Edith" upon the sands by Mr. Aird, and the copying of it by the child—a sacred conclusion to the lessons for the day, for it was his dead mother's name. As Mr. Aird stood regarding the rough letters which the tide was presently to erase, but which were engraved on his own innermost heart as on a tombstone beneath which she lay, his attention was arrested by a smothered voice from the cliff above.

"Mr. Aird, Mr. Aird, my head is going round! I want you to help me down!"

He looked up and beheld what he judged, by the voice, to be Mrs. Armytage; her face was averted from him, and kept close to the cliff, down which she had been proceeding backwards, and on all fours, until fear and giddiness had checked her progress.

"Confound the woman, what does she want here?" he muttered.

"I'm going, I'm falling!" continued the lady, in piteous accents. "I shall be dashed to pieces; help, help!"

In spite of this urgent appeal, to which little Davey also added his

entreaties ("She'll roll down, papa, and come flop"), he quietly drew the sand over both the names with his stick before proceeding to her rescue. He was a kindhearted man at bottom, but he had a sense of proportion, and rather than leave that sacred name for such a daw as Mrs. Armytage to peek at, he would have seen her roll twice the distance, which, indeed, was not very considerable.

At present, however, she resembled not so much a daw as those birds of prey which, having been shot by the keeper, are nailed to the door of his master's barn; or rather, perhaps, from her majestic size, the spread eagle of Prussia. Only those whose heads are apt to "go" or "turn round" when confronted with precipices, can fully appreciate her position. When she heard Mr. Aird scrambling slowly up towards her, she uttered an ejaculation of thankfulness. "I should have been gone," she said, "in another moment. Pray don't leave me."

"But, my dear madam, I can't stay here all day upon all fours. You must make an effort."

"I tell you I can't; I scarcely dare to breathe—Good gracious!"

Here a large stone, upon which one of her feet rested, gave way, and nearly carried away her would-be deliverer in its descent. The removal of this support made the poor lady's position to the last degree precarious. She would have said her prayers, but such was her agony of mind, that she could not recall them to her recollection.

"Take hold of me," she murmured, piteously; "take hold of me."

"My dear madam," replied Mr. Aird—whose countenance, I am afraid, indicated much more amusement than anxiety—"if I do so, it must be by the leg."

"By all means," said the lady, eagerly—she felt that it was no time for false delicacy—"take hold of it tight."

By this means, and following her preserver inch by inch, she accomplished the descent in safety.

"Upon my word, Mr. Aird," she said, presently, as soon as she found her footing and her breath, "I am greatly obliged to you."

"I assure you, madam," he replied, with a bow, "that it gave me much pleasure to assist you."

"And only to think," she cried, "that I should have incurred this peril on an errand of mercy!"

"That indeed seems very surprising," returned her deliverer, gravely.

"Yes; I came to seek you—and your dear boy." Here, in looking solemnly upwards to give evidence of her sincerity, she caught sight of the cliff. "Good gracious!" she exclaimed; "how am I ever to get up again?"

"We will see to that afterwards," said Mr. Aird, drily. "First accomplish the errand of mercy."

"Well; it's about poor Mr. Josceline and his daughter. I have just made their acquaintance, and a more interesting couple you cannot imagine."

"Indeed!" answered Mr. Aird, in a tone which unmistakably conveyed, "They don't interest *me* in the least."

"Poor Mr. Josceline is a great invalid, Mr. Aird, like yourself."

"Who told you I was a great invalid, ma'am?" inquired the old Indian, sharply.

As a matter of fact Mrs. Armytage had gathered from one of the hotel servants that Mr. Aird was occasionally subject to great pain, and had jumped to the conclusion, which, indeed, was a correct one, that he was the victim of some chronic complaint.

"Nobody told me," she cried; "but I gathered from the expression of your face that you were a sufferer. If it is not so, I am delighted to hear it. I am sure you will not feel less for those who do suffer. Mr. Josceline is a martyr to rheumatism of the heart."

"He must be a very communicative individual, madam, to have told you all that on so short an acquaintance."

"On the contrary; he is a reserved man, but one who can appreciate and reciprocate genuine sympathy. He and his daughter wish to come to the *table d'hôte* this afternoon; but their places will be next the door, and he is afraid of the draught. He did not tell me so, you will understand, but I gathered it. Now it struck me that you would not mind letting them have your seats—which are quite sheltered—and moving down a couple of places."

"My dear madam, I have not the least objection to your new friends sitting on my side of the table, but why should they not sit below instead of above us?"

"I thought of that of course; that would be the proper course; but that would separate your dear boy from his friend Mr. Vernon. And if they went below him there would be the draught again."

"Don't send away Mr. Vernon, papa," pleaded little Davey. "I love Mr. Vernon."

"That's just what I thought," observed Mrs. Armytage; "I said to myself, 'There's little Davey and his friend to be considered.'"

"I am obliged to you, madam," said Mr. Aird, his natural astuteness failing him for once in view of this proof of solicitude for his offspring. "You may tell Mr. Josceline that he may have my place with pleasure."

"That is only what I expected of you," exclaimed Mrs. Armytage, not, however, without some secret exultation at the success of her diplomacy. "I was sure you would be glad to oblige a gentleman of Mr. Josceline's quality. Now, if I could only get up that cliff."

This aspiration had preoccupied her mind, or she would never have expressed her satisfaction in terms so injudicious, which aroused, if not her companion's suspicions, at least his prejudices. He had reigned supreme for too many years as Chief Commissioner at Bundelcumbad to admit the pretensions of any British Brahmin, and thought himself as much a person of quality as this sprig of nobility.

"I dragged you down, madam," he observed, coldly; "but I honestly tell you that I am quite unequal to the task of dragging you up."

"Pray don't say that, Mr. Aird," pleaded the lady. Time was getting on, and the idea of being late at the *table d'hôte* on a supreme occasion presented itself to her in colours of eclipse. "I could not attempt such a thing, alone."

"Nevertheless, when the tide comes up, in about half an hour," said the other, looking at his watch, "I think you will make an effort. Davey, my boy, you and I must be going."

"You would never desert a female in distress," exclaimed the unfortunate lady.

"Of course not, my dear madam; I'll send a boat round from the village. The Professor will come for you himself, no doubt. I'll tell Mrs. Trant about the change of places, and ask her to keep an *entrée* warm for you."

Hand in hand with the child, he had already ascended the cliff beyond her reach, or it is certain she would have clung to him like an octopus. As it was, this melancholy result of her diplomacy, at the very moment, too, of its seeming triumph, was too much for her endurance; she plumped down on the sand, with her back to the foe, and fairly burst into tears of vexation.

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN THE CAT'S AWAY.

I AM afraid Mr. Aird did not increase his ordinary rate of speed when returning to the hotel. Little Davey and he had always plenty to talk about in the colours of the sea and sky, the grotesque formation of cliff and rocks, and all the wonders of the shore. Once the child inquired, but with more curiosity than apprehension, "The tide won't come up and drown Mrs. Armytage, will it, papa?" but on being assured that it would not, the topic was dismissed as one of inferior interest. Before they reached home, however, they met the Professor himself, returning from a scientific expedition, with his butterfly net and a tin case slung round his neck such as Gargantua might have used for his sandwiches.

On hearing that Mrs. Armytage was a prisoner in Wychett Cove he expressed a mild surprise. "There is nothing to be gathered there but samphire; the painted lady hardly ever visits it, and is difficult to catch on the sand. What on earth took her there, I wonder?"

Mr. Aird shrugged his shoulders. "Perhaps she went to bathe, and, finding us on the shore, didn't like to mention it. She begged me to tell you she wished a boat sent for her."

"Dear me," said the Professor, "that reminds me; I have found a curious specimen of the oar-beetle. We are told, Davey, we might learn

of the little nautilus how to sail; we could also learn of the oar-beetle how to row."

He sat down, opened his case, and began to lecture. Davey was entranced with the specimen, and that was enough for Mr. Aird. Never had professor a more attentive audience. Presently, upon the summer air was borne the sound of a distant gong.

"That's the half-hour bell for the *table d'hôte*!" exclaimed Mr. Aird. "Why, my dear sir, you have quite forgotten Mrs. Armytage."

"Not at all, not at all," said the Professor, with a last fond look at his entomological treasures ere he closed the box. "Let me see, what was it you said she wanted? Yes; I remember—a boat."

He moved pensively towards the village to procure the article, while Mr. Aird repaired to Mrs. Trant's parlour to give notice of the new arrangements at table.

The astonishment of the Joscelines was considerable when the neat-handed Phœbe appeared in their apartment and informed them, with Mr. Aird's compliments, that he had much pleasure in giving up his seats that Mr. Josceline and his daughter might be out of the draught.

"There must be some mistake," said Ella.

"Not at all, miss," said Phœbe. "Mr. Aird understood from Mrs. Armytage that your papa had the rheumatics."

"Quite right," interposed Mr. Josceline, blandly. "Say we are deeply obliged to him. By the bye, where *are* the seats?"

"At the head of the table, sir, next to Mrs. Armytage herself."

"I thought so," murmured Mr. Josceline; then, when the girl had left the room, "The fact is, my dear Ella, our friend Mrs. Armytage is Metternich, Talleyrand, and Machiavelli all rolled into one. But some little rift has taken place in the lute of her diplomacy. However, it is very kind of this Mr. Aird."

Ella thought so also, but felt no little surprise that her father should have expressed such a sense of a stranger's civility; for, though his good manners forbade his showing any pride in the ordinary sense of the word, he was by nature somewhat exclusive, and rarely welcomed attentions which he had not encouraged. On this occasion, however, when Mr. Josceline took his seat at table, he was not only gracious in his personal acknowledgment of Mr. Aird's kindness, but so cordial that that gentleman was unable to maintain his determined attitude of frigid politeness: it melted before Mr. Josceline's courtesy, and fairly gave way before the smile which accompanied Ella's introduction to him.

When Mr. Josceline said, "I am afraid our good friend Mrs. Armytage somewhat exaggerated my little ailment," his look and tone so fully conveyed he understood that lady, that Mr. Aird was drawn towards him still more nearly; and when Ella had taken friendly notice of little Davey—which was as natural for her to do as for a duck to take to the water—the father's heart was won.

In the meanwhile, the two new arrivals were the centre of general

attraction—a circumstance which, though well perceived by the one, was unobserved by the other, and caused Mrs. Percival-Lott to remark to her husband in a whisper that a little shyness in a young girl was in her opinion more becoming than an artificial confidence. The sensation they produced, however, was not a little counteracted by that excited by the absence of Mrs. Armytage, whose vacant chair at the head of the table rivalled in interest, in Mrs. Jennynge's eyes, that of Banquo's in *Macbeth*. Was her rival there, or was she not there? she could scarcely tell; but a feeling of enfranchisement gradually gathered strength within her.

It was not until the soup was removed, that Mr. Aird looked across the table, and inquired of the Professor whether he had despatched the boat for Mrs. Armytage.

"The boat?" returned the Professor, who as usual was immersed in scientific speculation—"oh, yes, I did! but, the wind and tide being both against it, the man said it would take time."

"But, my good sir," observed Mr. Vernon, who had learnt the state of affairs from his little neighbour, "it is almost high tide. Will not your wife be in some danger?"

"Our neap tides," returned the Professor, philosophically, "unless the wind is exceptionally high, do not rise on this part of the coast much beyond five feet."

It occurred to the company that as Mrs. Armytage also was certainly not much "beyond five feet," she might suffer considerable inconvenience even from a neap tide, but it seemed cruel to disturb such equanimity. Nevertheless, a touch of sympathy was not altogether wanting.

"I have ordered one of the *entrées* to be kept warm and brought in for her," observed Mr. Aird, "as soon as she makes her appearance."

"You are very good," said the Professor, looking ruefully at his champagne, to which he had helped himself much more liberally than circumstances had generally permitted him to do; "but I think, after so trying an adventure, she had better dine quietly in her own apartment."

"*Much* better," assented Mrs. Jennynge, confidently. "If she has got wet, indeed, I should recommend her going to bed immediately, with a hot bottle to her feet, and a mustard plaster over her chest."

"That sounds very sensible," agreed the Professor.

"I am told," said Mr. Aird, gravely, "that the only sure method of avoiding the possible effects of a severe cold is to keep one's room, thereby maintaining an equable temperature, for several days."

"There's nothing more in accordance with the rules of science," assented the Professor, drily; "but there is occasionally a difficulty with the patient."

"But a husband should use his authority," remarked Mrs. Jennynge.

"You must remember, my dear madam," whispered the Professor,

silly, as he emptied the last dregs of the champagne bottle, "that you are a widow."

"Indeed, sir, I can never forget it," she answered, with a sentimental sigh. "By the bye, Mr. Felspar, we have not had the pleasure of seeing you this morning."

Mr. Felspar was employed on a work of art for Mrs. Jennynge, which, though of a melancholy nature, had its compensations for her: he was painting a picture of her late husband, from photographs and other data with which she was constantly supplying him in the way of traits and recollections; and though, as she observed, "it reopened the floodgates of memory," it also gave her the opportunity of "gushing" to her heart's content, and also of patronising the artist.

"The weather was so beautiful that I could not resist doing a little out-of-door work this morning; but you will see me to-morrow," said Mr. Felspar.

Mrs. Jennynge shook her head in a manner that reprobated out-of-door work as compared with that of making illustrations from the tomb; and Mr. Vernon observed, "Since the weather has set in so fine, by the way, how about our picnic?"

The project had long been a topic of general conversation at the *Ultramarine*, but hitherto a continuance of wet weather had prevented its accomplishment; moreover, the idea, though emanating from Vernon, had, as usual, been seized upon and made use of as her own by Mrs. Armytage, which alone sufficed, in the eyes of some of the party, to make it unpopular. Now, however, that that lady was absent, and a ray of hope began to twinkle that she might be shut up with an attack of bronchitis, or at least catarrh, for some days, the proposal was received with favour.

"I doat upon picnics," observed Miss Jennynge, "and so does mamma."

"It seems to me, my dear," remarked that lady, whose courage was growing with every moment of her enemy's absence, "that we are not quite in the same position as we were when we last discussed that subject."

"Hear! hear!" said Mr. Percival-Lott softly; partly to encourage the speaker, and partly to express sympathy with the feelings which he imagined to be actuating her.

"When the cat's away," whispered Mr. Wallace to his wife, "the mice will play. That's what the old lady means."

Mrs. Wallace laughed as she always did at her husband's jokes; an excellent thing in any wife, and certainly not more than may be fairly expected when, as in this case, the husband makes but one joke a year or so; but her little outburst of hilarity, as it happened, was most unfortunate.

"I was about to say," continued Mrs. Jennynge, gravely, "when interrupted by that, I must say, somewhat misplaced laughter, that we

were not quite in the same position when the subject of the picnic was first mooted, by reason of an addition—I am sure a most welcome addition—to our little party.”

“If you are so good as to allude to myself and daughter, madam,” said Mr. Josceline, as Mrs. Jennynge gravely inclined her head in his direction, to give point to her remark, “I am sure we shall be only too happy to fall into any scheme for the general amusement.”

“Then, Mr. Aird,” said Mrs. Jennynge, whose style, it will be seen, had borrowed something of the majesty of her absent rival, “what do you think of a picnic on the Danecliff—we can’t take advantage too quickly of this magnificent sunshine—say to-morrow?”

“My dear madam, if you ask me what I think of a picnic,” returned the ex-Commissioner stiffly—for the patronage which even from Mrs. Armytage was unpalatable to him was from Mrs. Jennynge intolerable—“I can only say that I detest it; I believe it to be an invention of the doctors to promote diseases of the lungs and liver.”

Before any one could combat this amazing dogma, “What do *you* think of a picnic, Davey?” inquired Mr. Vernon of his young friend.

“If it’s dining in the open air,” replied the little fellow, cautiously, “I should like it dearly. We could sit in the trench of the Danecliff, papa dear, quite out of the wind.”

“Supposing the rash act has been determined upon, Mrs. Jennynge,” pursued Mr. Aird, with a transparent pretence of having paid no attention to the opinion of his offspring, “I think the Danecliff will be as good a place as any for the commission of it. It’s close to home, so that we can get there and back again and have the whole thing over as soon as possible.”

Under cover of this attractive picture of the promised treat, Ella had a hearty laugh at the sudden change of front assumed by her neighbour. “I don’t think papa is fond of you at all, Davey,” she said to the child, with a kind smile.

“Oh, but he is, and so is Verney!” replied the little fellow, simply.

“We are fond of him, Miss Josceline; but I do assure you we do not spoil him,” observed the young gentleman thus alluded to. “We are supposed to have discovered the happy medium between spoiling and indulging.”

“Mr. Vernon does spoil the boy,” said Mr. Aird, delighted with this notice of his favourite; “it is all I can do, Miss Josceline, by reproof and—and—severities, to counteract it.”

The notion of severities, as practised on little Davey by his parent, tickled his two listeners very much, and caused them to interchange laughing looks, to which Mr. Felspar contributed his quota.

“I am glad, Aird,” he remarked, “that somebody has at last had the courage to hint to you what a wicked boy Davey is growing up.”

“But I never said that, indeed,” protested Ella.

“My dear young lady, it is never worth while to notice what Mr.

Felspar says," observed Mr. Aird, with gravity. "But, especially, don't you listen to him if he proposes to paint you."

Ella blushed a little, becomingly and not confusedly, for the old Indian's tone was too good-natured to cause her any real embarrassment. She found herself getting on with her new neighbours much more agreeably than she had anticipated; while Mr. Josceline, on his part, had made a conquest, by quite other means, of Mrs. Jennynge and her daughter. If Mrs. Armytage had been present, and, as it were, in possession of him, they would, perhaps, have been inclined to be antagonistic, and given him some trouble; but, as it was, his easy manners (which they afterwards spoke of as his "affability") and dexterously manifested desire to please—combined, of course, with the recurring recollection that he was own brother to the Earl of Boroughby—caused them to fall easy victims. Next to natural gaiety and good manners (which are a rarity indeed) the art of assuming them is invaluable, and Mr. Josceline possessed it in perfection. When he ordered a pint of her favourite wine for himself, because he said a lady's opinion upon hock was incontestable by reason of the delicacy of her taste, Mrs. Jennynge experienced a fanatical impulse, difficult to repress, to tell him to order a gallon at her own expense. Nay, on the wine question, he even contrived to get counsel's opinion from Mr. Wallace and Mr. Percival-Lott (who knew one hock from another rather less than if it had been the hock of a horse), and, in short, so ingratiated himself with the whole party that it seemed a wonder to them how the *table d'hôte* could have ever got on without him.

It was when, thanks to him (for it had never been so before), conversation was becoming general, and little jets of laughter were being indulged in on all sides, that a loud tap was suddenly heard at the bay window. It was as though twelve o'clock had struck, and all Cinderella's footmen and horses had become rats and mice. Every one at least in a moment was as still as a mouse; for there stood Mrs. Armytage with her nose flattened against the pane, her eyes flashing fire, and her fingers beckoning to her husband with unmistakable vehemence.

"I think I had better go," said the Professor, rising, as the terrible vision vanished in the direction of the front door. "Why, the man said she couldn't be back for an hour and a half! I think she must have climbed up the cliff after all!"

No one had a doubt of it who had caught sight of Mrs. Armytage's gloves and attire, which exhibited undoubted signs of a prolonged pilgrimage upon hands and knees.

"Poor thing! Shall I go and see what I can do for her, papa?" whispered Ella, compassionately.

Mr. Josceline shook his head decisively. He knew that what would do Mrs. Armytage more good than anything just then was to speak her mind to the Professor.

"She seems to have had a bit of a scramble," observed Mrs. Jennynge, it must be owned in no very pathetic tones.

"I am sure I should not like to have got up those cliffs," exclaimed her daughter; and indeed, with her high heels, her tight dress, and her wagging train, it would have been a feat worthy of record.

"I am very sorry for her—exceedingly sorry," continued Mrs. Jennynge; "but, except for anxiety on her account, I must say we have had a very pleasant dinner."

"Yes; but there's one thing," observed Mrs. Wallace, "which has made me miserable all the time. We have been thirteen at table, and therefore, you know, one of us is sure to die before the year is out."

"Oh, how horrid!" exclaimed Mrs. Percival-Lott, with a becoming shudder. "How can you talk of such things?"

"It's never done in the best society," murmured Mrs. Jennynge, looking to Mr. Josceline for corroboration. She was the oldest person present, and naturally deemed the remark personal as well as objectionable.

"It is a superstition, foolish enough [in itself," remarked Felspar, "and yet, as it happens, borne out by facts. The actuaries tell us that the probability is that one person out of thirteen will really 'join the majority' in twelve months."

"Is that true?" whispered Mr. Aird anxiously to Vernon, and with an involuntary glance at the boy beside him.

"Yes, quite true—of adults. It would not be so of a party of young people, of course."

As the ladies rose to go, Mr. Aird uttered a sigh of relief which might have been mistaken for an incivility.

CHAPTER VIII.

TWO METHODS OF PLEASING.

By desire of her father, Ella repaired after dinner to the ladies' drawing-room, instead of returning, as she would have preferred, to their own sitting-room; he was confident that the more they knew of her, the more she would be liked by her own sex (or at least by the best of them), and he did not wish them to compromise themselves by expressing in her absence an opinion which, on a short acquaintance, might fall short of her merits. As a man of the world he was well aware that, when a new arrival comes under discussion in any community, the general tendency is to criticise rather than to commend; and for the same reason he himself repaired with the gentlemen to the billiard-room. He would have pressed the matter on Ella still more earnestly had it been necessary, had he been aware of the advantage she possessed on that particular evening, in the absence of Mrs. Armytage, whose patronage would have told sorely against her with the rest. The attempts made by Mrs. Jennynge to place Ella under her own protection were feeble (because of

the respect of that lady for her young friend's exalted rank), and easily put aside; and though Miss Jennynge's civility was a little overwhelming, she submitted to it with good-natured grace. If Mrs. Percival-Lott was a little stately, something must be excused to a bride (for such she really was) on the first occasion she had enjoyed of lording it over an unmarried girl of about her own age. Her husband (cunning fellow) had expressed his opinion to her that Miss Josceline did not bear close inspection—he had certainly stared enough at her at dinner to justify him for giving judgment on that point—and Mrs. Lott, while quite agreeing with him, had, therefore, become mollified in respect to that young lady.

As for Mrs. Wallace, Ella's cheerful smile and pleasant manner, so very different from that with which the other ladies treated her, at once won her simple heart. When the tea was handed round, Ella praised the cream, which indeed was very different at the *Ultramarine* to hotel cream in general.

"It is like Devonshire cream," she said.

"Lor, my dear, that shows you have never been in Devonshire!" cried the farmer's wife. "I should like you to taste our cream at Foracre Farm." Whereupon Ella said she should like to have the opportunity, and Mrs. Wallace rejoined she would be "kindly welcome." It was not a very brilliant reply, but it had the merit of genuineness—in which brilliant replies are sometimes wanting—for it was plain she meant it.

There was a piano in the room, at which each of the young ladies sat down in turn, on Mrs. Jennynge's invitation. Her daughter sang an Italian song, which, however attractive to a trained ear, was a little bewildering in its "alarms and excursions," and which, requiring a very open mouth, and an exertion of the lungs that brought all the blood to the face, did not add to her personal beauty; the suspected bride warbled about a rover of the sea, to whom it would appear she had been wildly attached before she met with Mr. Lott; and Ella sang that simple but touching ditty "The Land of the Leal."

"Now that's what I call singing!" observed Mrs. Wallace, wiping her eyes, which had been shedding a rain of quiet tears throughout this performance—"I'm wearin' awa', John, like snow when it's thaw, John; that's just what our poor Jeannie did."

"Was that your daughter?" inquired Ella, tenderly.

"No, my dear; she was my niece. God did not bless me with a daughter, but He lent me one who loved me as dearly as though she had been, though she was but my niece by marriage; then He thought fit to take her from me. His will be done. She was not unlike yourself, my dear, but older; perhaps half-way between you and Miss Jennynge yonder."

"Really, Mrs. Wallace," exclaimed the young lady alluded to, "I wish you would find some other topic to talk about besides death! You

have already made everybody uncomfortable once before this evening, by your reference to our being thirteen at table."

"I'm very sorry," said Mrs. Wallace, humbly; "but it's a belief in Devonshire that when thirteen——"

"Then keep it for Devonshire," interrupted Miss Jennynge, sharply; "one comes to an hotel to enjoy oneself, madam, not to be preached at."

"That's very true," returned Mrs. Wallace, "and I ask your pardon for speaking just now from a full heart. To young people like yourself it must have sounded out of tune, as you said of the pianner; whereas your good mother and me, who are growing near our latter ends——"

"Do you paint, Miss Josceline, as well as sing?" interrupted Mrs. Jennynge, with abruptness, and turning very red.

"I do a little; I am very fond of it."

"Ah, you're a judge of paintings, no doubt; then you must come to our room to-morrow, and see my daughter's sketches."

"Oh, they are nothing," said Miss Jennynge, carelessly; "they are merely records of our travels on the Continent."

"That is not the opinion of some good judges, my dear Anastasia," continued her mother, in mild remonstrance. "I also have some records of another kind, Miss Josceline, to show you," she added, pathetically; "shall we say eleven o'clock? In the afternoon, you know, there will be the picnic."

"I am sure I shall be very happy," said Ella; which I am afraid was very far from being the truth. She had one of those natures eminently unphilosophic, which prompts their possessor to give others pleasure at any sacrifice of herself, and it should be added that she generally achieved her object.

Her father was cast in a very different mould; yet he, too, on the whole, may be said to have made it his business to increase the sum of human happiness. He was thought to be "the best company in the world" by very many persons of his own sex who were supposed to be judges in such a matter; and with ladies he had been at least equally popular. Advancing years, however, and indifferent health had, without dulling his natural gaiety, made the exhibition of it more difficult, since it was now necessary to conceal from others his private sense of effort; and especially was this the case when, as in the present instance, the society it was his mission to captivate was not to his taste. The atmosphere of a public billiard-room was, indeed, to the last degree unfavourable to such talents as those possessed by Mr. Josceline, and it was quite marvellous, under the circumstances, how they contrived to flourish: it resembled the success achieved in some East-end window-garden society, where a tea rose, with quite an unexpected felicity of association, is made to blossom in a milk-jug.

Mr. Josceline could play billiards of course—he could play anything, from quadrille to American bowls, that men of fashion did play—not

that he liked games, but because not to know them is sometimes a serious social disadvantage; but he was not a first-rate performer with the cue. It does not make a man popular to be so, because he is always beating people with it; his hand, too, is against every man's—not as at whist, where he has at least a partner to share his good fortune. At pool, indeed, which was the game proposed to be played on the present occasion, there is no easier method of winning the suffrages of one's fellow-creatures than to play indifferently; but Mr. Josceline scorned a triumph so ignoble, and, moreover, it had of late become a principle with him never—unless something of importance was to be gained by it—to part with ready money. He could have held his own, had he cared to do so, with Mr. Felspar and Mr. Vernon; but not with Mr. Percival-Lott, who, like some doughty knight of old who had made a vow always to wear his visor down, made up for his silence in bower and hall by his dexterity with the cue, and took life after life with as much *sang-froid* as a crusader slaying Pagans; with this great advantage over his prototype, that he also pocketed their ransoms.

It was no pleasure to Mr. Josceline, as it was certainly no profit, to contend with this young gentleman; and after he had lost a few six-pennies with a gayer air than some others wear in winning them, he put by his cue, on plea of fatigue, and watched the players from the sofa. The Professor was still closeted with his wife, and Mr. Aird, as usual, before smoking his cheroot, had gone to superintend little Davey's sleeping arrangements; so Mr. Josceline was left alone with the three young gentlemen. Under such circumstances, some men of mature years, who have a reputation for talk, recommend themselves to their company by attempting the rôle of Falstaff and succeeding in that of Silenus; but Mr. Josceline never stooped so low even to conquer. He told them anecdotes of the game, as though the literature of billiards had been his study, interspersed with such lively reminiscences of his own, of bets and wagers, as made Vernon and Felspar shake with laughter, and caused Mr. Percival-Lott to pause on his stroke—as the poet's song arrested the wild swan—ere he dropped his adversary into the pocket. When Mr. Aird appeared, Mr. Josceline's tactics altogether altered. He became a patient listener, with a feverish desire to hear the truth about our Indian Empire, and even accepted from the ex-commissioner one of its native productions, in the shape of a cheroot, which he would as soon have thought of smoking as of eating. "If you will allow me," he said, "I will put this in my cigarette case as a *bonne bouche*."

The whole case of the cartridges, the chupatties, and the other causes of the mutiny were gone into by Mr. Aird, at a length that probably made his companion think, with Artemus Ward, that "Indians is pison wherever found;" but his apparent interest never flagged. Nay, like some noble savage at the stake, he himself suggested fresh implements of torture to his persecutor.

"Do you think the Sepoys may be really trusted now?" he inquired.

"No, sir: I will tell you what occurred six months ago, to my own personal knowledge. I was engaged to dine with the 123rd, at Dustybad. By the merest accident one of the officers chanced to glance into the cooking-tent, and this is what he saw. There was a joint roasting for the mess dinner, and half-a-dozen of the officers' servants were standing round it, spitting on it. That is their way of showing contempt; and as they couldn't spit on us, they did it by deputy. These same Sepoys, looking as if butter wouldn't melt in their mouths even in that climate, waited at dinner, each standing behind his master's chair. When the mutton was brought up, each officer rose and produced a revolver. The colonel made a neat little speech, inviting the men to take their places at the table, or, as the other alternative, to have their brains blown out. As he was a very determined man, they accepted his hospitality; though, after what had happened to the joint in the kitchen, it involved the loss of caste to every one of them. One has heard of "eating the leek," but that is nothing in comparison with that meal of the Sepoys at Dustybad; it would have taken all Mr. Felspar's art to depict their countenances. The anecdote is trivial; but it is a fact, and I think a significant one as regards the adhesion of the Sepoys to the British 'raj.'"

"A more striking illustration of the social and political situation," said Mr. Josceline, gravely, "I never heard. It is a volume of history in itself;" and he rose from his seat with a murmur about the necessity of his keeping early hours, but in reality to prevent the issue of a second volume. To him, to listen to a man expounding a theory, was as bad as though he were detailing a grievance; it gave him a positive mental torture of which more phlegmatic natures have no experience, and in his present state of ill-health the pangs of boredom were felt more severely than usual. It must certainly, therefore, have been for some weighty reason that Mr. Josceline had been so patient under the flow of eloquence of the commissioner of Dustybad, and had even, as it were, pulled the string of the shower-bath with his own dainty hand.

CHAPTER IX.

MRS. AND MISS JENNYNGE.

It is a trite observation that petty things make up the sum of our lives, and that if the effect of them is, on the whole, agreeable, one or two great misfortunes can be borne *per contrà* with comparative philosophy. It is not, however, so well understood how the indulgence in certain tastes, and even in certain amusements, will cause them in time to assume immense proportions in our own minds, so that, providing these are left to us, the weightier matters of the Law—and, alas! even the Gospel—sink into com-

parative insignificance. Among the male sex, the pursuit of what men call gallantry, and moralists by another name, is a striking instance of this, and is by no means confined to the frivolous and idle; while the game of whist is, for others, equally attractive. Metternich, though he applied himself to that amusement late in life, became so absorbed in it that even politics were neglected for it; and it is on record that several hundred persons were put to death (it was in Hungary, or some out-of-the-way place, so that no great stir was made about it) through an express messenger being detained for some hours in his ante-room, while he was just playing that last rubber which possesses such elastic attributes, and has kept many a better man up to the small hours, who otherwise makes it a principle to be in bed by ten o'clock.

What is rather curious, women, who are accused of frittering away their time on little things, rarely exhibit such complete devotion to trifles; their tastes, as the poet tells us are their passions, compared with ours, are "as moonlight unto sunlight, and as water unto wine." Nevertheless, some ladies have hobbies which they ride (sideways of course) with considerable persistence. Mrs. Jennynge's hobby was a sort of hearse-horse, for it consisted in a devotion to the memory of her late second husband. Some suggested that this arose from the consciousness that a balance of affection was still due to him, since while he was alive she had not overwhelmed him with demonstrations of it; but the more charitable refused to countenance this scandal. Mr. Nathaniel Jennynge, who was much her senior, had, they said, entertained a prejudice against third marriages, and it was confidently expected that he would make a material protest against them in his will; whereas he had omitted to do so, and it was, they said, out of gratitude to him for his forbearance that his widow burnt incense to his manes.

Miss Anastasia, who had been left more dependent upon her mother than she wished people to know, was not very enthusiastic in these pious observances, though she had her reasons for a show of respect for them; but you could not know Mrs. Jennynge long without hearing a good deal more of her dear departed—"not lost," she said, "but gone before"—than, as a stranger to that good man, you were likely to want.

It was, of course, with no apprehensions of this nature, but still with no pleasurable expectations, that Ella repaired next morning at the time appointed to Mrs. Jennynge's apartment. She had not taken very kindly either to that lady or her daughter, but she always kept her word; and, moreover, not a little to her surprise, her father had expressed satisfaction at the invitation.

"Mrs. Jennynge evidently wishes to make friends, my dear, and young people should never refuse the hand of welcome."

The last sentence, which certainly did not resemble Mr. Josceline's style, he had opportunely discovered in that stray volume of the *Mirror* for 1816 among "the maxims and sentiments," though he did not think it worth while to acknowledge his indebtedness.

Mrs. Jennynge and her daughter were in what the former would have called *en grande tenue*—attired with an elegance appropriate to a visit from the granddaughter of the Earl of Boroughby—while their apartment was arranged with a studied carelessness which would, no doubt, have reminded her of the “interiors” at Boroughby Park, only she had never chanced to see them. There was an assemblage of nearly twenty splendidly bound volumes on the book-shelf, with a French dictionary hidden behind them, to which Mrs. Jennynge by no means intended to allude when she said that “she never moved without her library.” On one table was every description of painting materials that the wiliness of the dealer in art could suggest; and on the other the most elaborate arrangement for the manufacture of artificial flowers in wax, for which the elder lady was wont to say with modesty, but some anomalousness of expression, that she had some little “natural gift.” As a matter of fact she spent half her time about it, and placed her friends in much embarrassment from their inability to guess without assistance what object of nature she was engaged in imitating. Fortunately, the variety was limited, since she only affected flowers of a hue that typified her forlorn condition. On the present occasion she was evolving violets, which did not admit of much confusion with their floral rivals. “I cannot lay them ‘fresh and fresh,’” she said (a phrase which had an unfortunate resemblance to the ‘hot and hot’ of the cheap restaurateur) upon his grave, my dear Miss Josceline; but I produce them, as you see, in fac-simile, as a chaplet for his marble brow.”

“She is speaking of papa,” observed Anastasia, in frigid explanation.

“Oh, indeed!” said Ella. It was not a very sympathetic reply, but then she had hardly recovered from the impression at first produced upon her mind that Mrs. Jennynge was insane.

“I venture to think they have some *vraisemblance*,” resumed the mourner, critically; “and they have this advantage over the violet of our fields, that they do not fade and perish as, alas! those whom we love are wont to do, unless you put them to the fire.”

The last remark, of course, referred to the wax violets and not to the deceased, who, it is to be hoped, was not being exposed to such a crucial test. “I am doing some amaranths for his dear birthday,” she continued, pathetically; “you know the amaranth, of course?”

It was most fortunate that Mrs. Jennynge here reproduced a specimen in wax of that most classical, and, as poor Ella had imagined, mythological flower, and thus enabled her visitor to conceal ignorance in admiration. “These and a sprig of lavender are all the tributes fate has permitted me to pay to him.”

These words, so far beyond her ordinary style, Mrs. Jennynge delivered with a corresponding elevation of tone and manner; their effect upon her visitor was, however, naturally weakened by the fact that she knew nothing about the deceased. There was another circumstance which made any expression of sympathy a little difficult. Anastasia not

only took no part in the conversation, but obviously despised it. She stood gloomily regarding her two companions with her thumb in her mouth; if you had taken it out and examined it, you would have found it, from constant suction, pale and flabby like the thumb of a washer-woman. Whenever she was annoyed, and especially, as on the present occasion, by her mother's behaviour, she took to her thumb for comfort. It was an admirable safety-valve for her temper, since while she was sucking it she was compelled to be silent; but to a stranger its effect as a silent commentary upon a eulogy of the dead was, to say the least of it, incongruous.

"Behind this screen," continued Mrs. Jennynge, pointing to a spacious enclosure of red baize used in winter time in the *salle à manger* to keep off the draught from the door, "are such memorials of dear Nathaniel as I am able to carry about with me. I do not show them to every one; but you, with your long line of noble ancestry, will know how to appreciate devotion to the departed."

She led the way behind the screen, and poor Ella followed; a last glance at Anastasia revealed her frowning heavily, and sucking with such indignant vigour at her thumb that the action was audible, like that of an air-pump. "These are Nathaniel's photographs; they bear a likeness to him of course, but ah! what a difference to what he was in life! The cabinets are, it is thought, the best."

Even the cabinets, however, did not convey a very favourable impression of the deceased Mr. Jennynge. Perhaps the sun had not been propitious, but it had certainly portrayed a very commonplace individual—a short, pudgy man with a book in his hand, which, from the expression on his face, ought to have been a publican's ledger; it was labelled "Lyrics of the Heart." However, it was quite clear that Mr. Nathaniel Jennynge had not known what to do with it, nor even how to hold it. The circumstances of his finding himself in a mossy cavern, with a fountain springing up in alarming proximity to his white waistcoat, had doubtless deprived him of his usual repose of manner, for he looked very ill at ease. In another and smaller picture he was represented as leaning on a broken column in what was meant to be an attitude of meditation; but it was impossible to escape from the conviction that he had taken more than was good for him, and felt the need of external support.

"I think I like the cabinet one best," observed Ella, quietly.

"So most people say," sighed Mrs. Jennynge; "but of course it does not satisfy *me*."

"Of course not," said poor Ella; thinking, indeed, that, if it did, Mrs. Jennynge must be very easily satisfied. "Photographs seldom give the characteristic expression."

"You are quite right, my dear Miss Josceline. That is the very reason why I have employed Mr. Felspar—quite regardless of expense—to paint me a picture of my Nathaniel. I have supplied him with all the materials. This is his head—don't be afraid, my dear," for Ella had

started in alarm at the object presented to her notice. "It is only a cast taken after death. Perhaps you have never seen one before?"

It so happened that Ella had seen one; and that very circumstance had contributed to her apprehensions. The girls at her Clapham academy had once been taken for a treat to Madame Tussaud's exhibition, and the entertainment had very injudiciously included the Room of Horrors. It seemed to her that she was now looking at some duplicate specimen of those homicidal heads.

"It is not pretty, of course," admitted Mrs. Jennynge, "but to the eye of an artist it is invaluable. What I say to Mr. Felspar is, 'Here are the photographs of my dear Nathaniel, and this is the original'—dear me, there is Mr. Felspar."

The door of the room was opened, and the artist's voice was heard interchanging "How d'ye doos" with Miss Anastasia. Ella seized the opportunity to escape, somewhat abruptly, from the screen and its memorials; and perhaps the joy of enfranchisement gave to her acknowledgment of the artist's polite greeting a little more warmth than it would otherwise have exhibited. At all events Mr. Felspar looked grateful for it, as he threw back his flowing hair by a quick movement of his head—an action as natural to him, when pleased, as it is to a dog to wag his tail.

"I had no idea you had a visitor here, Mrs. Jennynge," he said.

"Yes; Miss Josceline was so good as to look in upon us. But that need not take up your time, you know," she added, brusquely. "You can go on with my picture just the same."

Anastasia's thumb, which had been hurriedly withdrawn from her mouth to welcome the visitor, was within an ace of going in again at this remark; while poor Ella felt hot all over.

Mr. Felspar coloured a little (which was, after all, only professional), but his tone manifested no annoyance as he replied with a smile, "As I work by the piece and not by the day, Mrs. Jennynge, if I waste my time it is not you who suffer from it. I see, by the way," pointing to an unfinished drawing on the table, "that you, Miss Anastasia, have not been idle."

"Oh, it is nothing," returned that young lady, carelessly.

"I have been trying one of those very headlands this morning, Miss Jennynge," observed Ella, "but I have not been nearly so successful. I am sure I could never manage the distances as you have done."

"Mr. Felspar shaded them off for me," answered Anastasia, bluntly.

"Indeed, I gave her but very little help," put in the artist. "If I can be of any similar use to you, Miss Josceline, with these unpleasant distances, you are very welcome to my assistance."

"You are very kind; but I am quite a novice," said Ella, "and it would be very wrong to encroach upon your time."

"Oh, we can spare him for an hour occasionally to you, Miss Josceline," remarked Mrs. Jennynge; "though I wouldn't say so to everybody."

Mr. Felspar laughed goodnaturedly, which put Ella at her ease; otherwise she would have felt no little embarrassment, since she naturally imagined that when Mr. Felspar was not rescuing the deceased Mr. Jennynge's features from oblivion, he was engaged professionally in giving lessons to Anastasia; whereas what he did for her was quite gratuitous. At the same time it could hardly be called voluntary, since it was in response to a pretty broad hint of her mother's: "A word of advice from *you*, Mr. Felspar, would be invaluable to my dear Anastasia." Like many other very rich people, Mrs. Jennynge derived great gratification from getting anything for nothing.

"When you come to the picnic this afternoon," continued Mr. Felspar, "I hope both you young ladies will bring your sketch-books. There are a great many 'objects of interest,' as the guide-book calls them, to be seen from the Danecliff, by help of which we can improve the shining hour."

"But would it not teach them something to see you at work *now*?" inquired Mrs. Jennynge, graciously; "they will be as quiet as mice, I am sure, so that you could give your attention just the same."

"No, madam," interrupted Mr. Felspar drily; "when I am engaged on anything of exceptional importance, I find it necessary to work by myself." The tone in which he spoke admitted of no contradiction, else he had hitherto made no objection to Miss Anastasia and her mother being witnesses to his work. But, in the case of Miss Josceline, something made him unwilling to exhibit himself before her in the degrading occupation of "pot-boiling;" especially, too, as in delineating the late Mr. Nathaniel Jennynge he had to deviate a great deal from the strict line of truth (as exhibited in the human countenance), and, as regarded that of beauty, to borrow largely from his imagination. Indeed, he felt not a little uncomfortable, as it was, thus exposed in her presence to their hostess's patronage, and after a little further talk he withdrew himself into the sanctuary formed by the red baize screen, into which he was followed by Mrs. Jennynge.

"I am sorry," said Anastasia, the moment her mother had disappeared, "that mamma should have gone on so to you about papa."

"It is only natural——" began Ella in extenuation.

"It is *not* natural," interrupted the other, with hushed vehemence; "of course I know what you really think about it—it is a monomania. She had a painted window to his memory in our last house with 'His spirit watches here' upon it; and now we have moved she has had it put up in our new home. His spirit can't watch *everywhere*, you know; it is really too ridiculous."

"Still, if it pleases your mother?" pleaded Ella.

"It doesn't please her," broke in Anastasia, with irritation; "she only wishes other people to believe it does. And, of course, she doesn't impose upon them for an instant. Mr. Felspar, for example, though he is as poor as a rat, is quite ashamed of having undertaken to paint a

picture from those horrible things." She pointed to the screen with her thumb, and then thrust it in her mouth as though it were its natural sheath.

It was curious, but very unpleasant, to see such a display of scorn and resentment in one to all appearance so artificial and devoid of human passion ; it reminded one of the scream of a peacock.

"Is Mr. Felspar a good artist?" inquired Ella, eager to change the conversation.

"Yes; Mr. Vernon says"—she hesitated a moment, then added, carelessly, "but then, to be sure, he is his friend—that he can do anything he chooses; there are some people who enjoy that sort of reputation, you know, who never do anything. He has a great name, however, for so young a man, in portrait painting. And, of course, his advice even about landscapes and things is worth having."

"And is Mr. Vernon a painter too?"

"Oh, dear, no; he is an author; he writes beautiful poetry and gets it published too—in the magazines. Did you not know that?"

"I know scarcely anything," said Ella modestly. "I have been shut up at school all my life, and we were not allowed to read the magazines. I shall be quite afraid of Mr. Vernon after what you have told me. And now I think I must wish you good-bye, as papa may be wanting me."

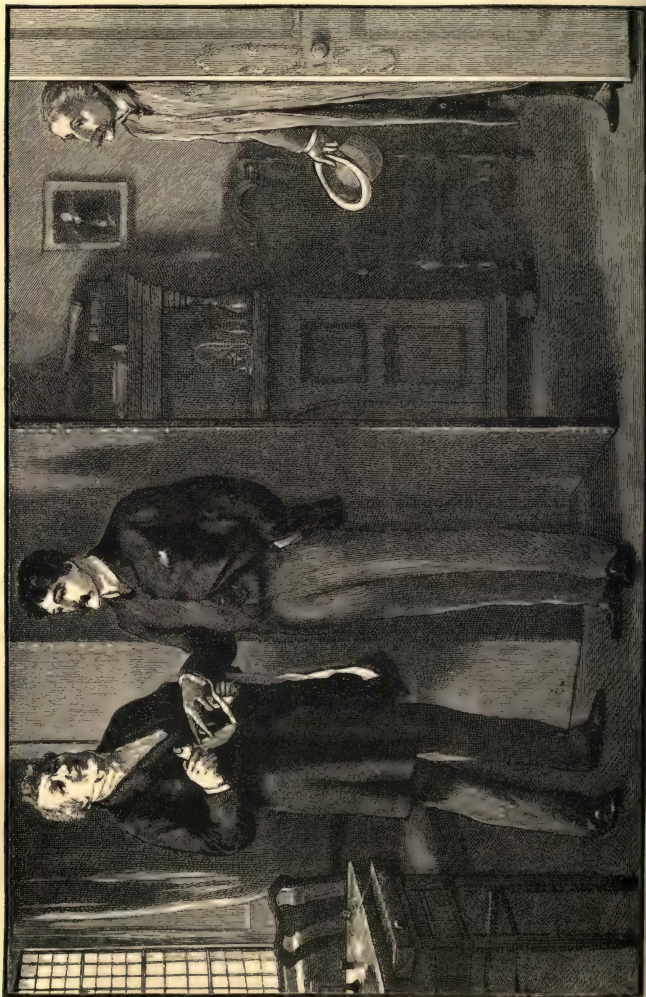
"But you are coming to the picnic, of course, and will bring your drawing materials, as you promised Mr. Felspar?"

"Oh, I think I had rather not do that; I am quite ashamed of my poor efforts."

"No matter; Mr. Felspar will teach you to do better. We must all have a beginning, you know, and it will be such a pleasure to me to work with you."

"You are very good, I am sure," said Ella, gratefully; and took her leave more favourably impressed with her new acquaintance than she had been a few minutes ago.

Perhaps, however, it was not mere goodness that caused Miss Jekyll to be so pressing in her request that her new acquaintance should bring her drawing materials to the picnic; and I doubt whether she would have pressed it had she seen Ella's sketch of the headland, which, apart from Mr. Felspar's improving touches, was, in reality, considerably superior to her own.



THE
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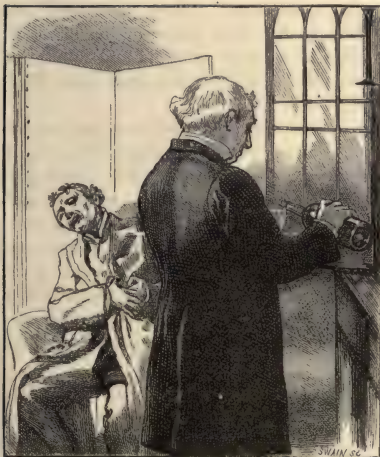
MARCH, 1881.

A Grape from a Thorn.

BY JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER X.

DRIVERS AND WALKERS.



It is not to be supposed that all this time Mrs. Armytage has been nowhere; that the sun (so to speak) of Wallington Bay has dropped out of its own system; it was only in temporary eclipse. Of course there were many inquiries—*anxious inquiries*—on the morning after her little misadventure, when she did not take her usual place at the public breakfast table, after her health or the want of it; and, on the whole, the reports were reassuring. It was certain that she would

not be up and about for a day or two. The Professor did not, indeed, afford this information with his own lips; he was retained in close attendance upon his lady, and could not be interviewed; but Phœbe said that Mrs. Armytage seemed “that bad” with fatigue and worry, and

"that shook" with what she had gone through, that she could not get on her feet for days "if it was ever so." And yet the picnic to the Danecliff was not postponed on that account.

Mrs. Armytage was not really a bad woman—not perhaps worse, on the whole, than the majority of her own charming sex; but, as a rule, they didn't like her. She was too managing and too masterful; she got her own way when she was up and doing; but when she was down, which is the crucial test of authority, no one bowed to it; that is, no one but her maid and the Professor, who couldn't help themselves. Such is the fate of all tyrants. It is a melancholy fact that there are thousands of respectable households who never enjoy themselves so much as in the absence of their head. He may be an excellent man in his way, hard working as a bread-winner, and unselfish in the matter of his own pleasures; but he inspires less of love than fear; and when he is away from his own house, it is as though a weight were lifted from the hearts of its inmates. And sometimes, though not so commonly, this is the case with the female head. Mrs. Armytage was no enemy to pleasure, nay, she liked to see people enjoy themselves; but then it must be after her own fashion and under her own control. I remember seeing in an old comic journal of Tory politics a picture of a physical-force Chartist taking his little boy out for a holiday in the fields. The man had a truculent face, and in one hand he held a big stick, and in the other the *Flag of Freedom* newspaper. "Now, look here," he observes to his trembling offspring, at the same time shaking his stick at him, "I have brought you out here to enjoy yourself, and mind you do it, or I'll know the reason why." And of this good man Mrs. Armytage was an unconscious imitator.

Mrs. Jennynge did not even give herself the trouble to deplore her rival's absence, but took the command of the whole expedition with a light heart. She made her arrangements for the picnic with Mrs. Trant, just as though she had not succeeded to the command by a physical misfortune, and ordered the eatables and drinkables with great cheerfulness, while her prostrate enemy was confined to her own apartment upon a diet of toast and water-gruel. A cart and horse were despatched at one o'clock with all that was required for the feast, and the men had orders to lay the cloth upon the very summit of the hill—for there was scarcely a breath of wind—in order to command the greatest extent of view.

An hour afterwards the whole party started for the rendezvous; Mr. Josceline (by reason of the delicacy of his health) in a pony-carriage belonging to the hotel, with Mrs. Jennynge, while the rest followed on foot. What reason Mrs. Jennynge had for the use of a wheel carriage did not appear; it was certainly not because of her years; indeed, she looked particularly fresh, and (as Mr. Aird rather maliciously added) "blooming;" doubtless she was excited by having such a distinguished person as the new arrival for her companion. The pair on wheels had

to make a little *détour* to reach the top of the hill, which afforded opportunity for a little private conversation. If the lady was interested in the history of the house of Boroughby, the gentleman did not disdain to put a question or two respecting that of Jennynge. Nobility, he observed, in answer to some flattering remarks of his companion, "was no doubt an excellent institution; but what would become of it were not its ranks occasionally recruited from the great names in commerce. That of Jennynge in connection with the useful calling—or might he not term it an art?—of drysalting was not unknown to him.

This fact was very pleasing to Mrs. Jennynge's ears, and secretly a little surprised her.

"My late husband," she nevertheless replied, "was indeed very well known, I believe."

"A great name on 'Change," assented Mr. Josceline, quoting from he was not quite sure what, at a venture.

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Jennynge, applying her handkerchief to her eyes; "it was only when they lost him, however, that they found out my dear Nathaniel's value."

She meant his moral worth; but the word 'Change no doubt had led Mr. Josceline's mind into more material channels, for he replied, "I remember reading his will in the papers; he left a princely fortune, did he not?"

"He left me very tidily off," said Mrs. Jennynge, modestly; "but what was money to me when my Nathaniel was gone?"

"Except for the pleasure it might afford you from the exercise of acts of benevolence," suggested Mr. Josceline, gravely.

"Just so," returned the lady; remembering with gusto that she had given 50*l.*, after some haggling, to the widow of Nathaniel's clerk, who had fallen into difficulties. The recollection of this munificence gave her courage. "You, too, Mr. Josceline, have loved and lost," she said.

"Eh, what?" returned that gentleman, rather irritably, for the pony-carriage was not well hung, and he had been just shaken by a rut. Then suddenly becoming conscious of the subject of allusion, he frowned darkly. Mrs. Jennynge was not a sensitive plant, but she knew when she had leant her hand on broken glass.

"I am afraid I have touched a tender chord, sir; I only meant that you, too, have lost the partner of your joys."

"Yes," he replied, quietly; "it was a long time ago, when my Ella was quite a child; but one does not forget such things."

"Still one ought to—don't you think—in time?" observed Mrs. Jennynge, comfortingly.

"One ought," he assented. "One *does*, sometimes."

He glanced at the widow with what she thought the most gentlemanly sigh she had ever heard—and then fixed his eyes on the splash-board.

"Your daughter seems a most charming young lady," observed Mrs. Jennynge, after an interval of silence and embarrassment.

"She was making the very same remark to me this morning about yours," replied Mr. Josceline.

"Anastasia is generally admired—that is, in our own comparatively humble circle of society," said Mrs. Jennynge, with humility.

"Beauty and accomplishments, my dear madam, are a nobility in themselves," answered Mr. Josceline; "when, as in her case, they are accompanied by wealth"—he noticed a movement of negation made by the flowers and fruits in his companion's bonnet; it was so slight that by some persons it might have been attributed to the jolting of the vehicle—"or by great expectations," he added, hastily, "such endowments make their possessor the equal of any lady in the land."

"The dear girl has expectations, of course," rejoined Mrs. Jennynge, quietly—"very natural expectations—but she is entirely dependent upon me. My beloved Nathaniel—Mr. Felspar is doing a beautiful picture of him, you must see it some day—placed such entire confidence in my discretion."

"That is not to be wondered at; yet I dare say, like many other loving husbands, he showed himself unwilling that you should form any fresh tie. When, as in your case, a woman has been thus left desolate in the heyday of her youth, it seems so hard——"

"Oh, no; there was no stipulation of any kind," interrupted the lady. "My excellent Nathaniel was too unselfish, too—too——"

"Too reasonable," suggested Mr. Josceline; "well, that was immensely to his credit; for though there is a great deal of talk about persons in your forlorn condition finding their happiness only in that of others, yet we are human after all, and retain our own individuality, our likes and dislikes, our capacities for affection—is it not so?"

"It is, indeed," said Mrs. Jennynge; and she fixed *her* eyes upon the splash-board.

"Nevertheless," pursued Mr. Josceline, in a less plaintive tone, caused, perhaps, by the reflection that he had gone far enough in sentiment for that morning, "nevertheless to persons of our time in life—or rather I should say of mine, for, as Ella and I were agreeing, one can scarcely believe that Miss Jennynge can be a daughter of your own—the contemplation of the pleasures of our children is one of the few enjoyments we have left to us. See yonder how our young people are enjoying themselves;" and he pointed with his whip to where Ella and Anastasia accompanied by Vernon and Felspar could be seen approaching them by a short cut; they were evidently in high good humour, for their laughter rang through the still summer air. Behind them came the suspected bride, pushed (very suspiciously) up the hill by the application of her husband's hands to her waist; next followed Mr. and Mrs. Wallace, with less demonstration of connubial bliss, a sober couple of the "John

Anderson" type; while in the rear came Mr. Aird and Davey, hand-in-hand, as usual.

The two young men were in great spirits, which with Vernon was a common case; but Felspar was naturally of a serene and philosophic turn of mind, which was the cause of no little raillery on the part of his friend and fellow-lodger. This afternoon, however, no one could complain of Mr. Felspar on the score of want of vivacity, for he was poking all sorts of fun at Vernon—it must be owned to the young ladies' great amusement—on account of a certain commission he had received that morning, from his magazine editor, to write the letterpress in verse for a certain illustration to appear in the next monthly number.

"It is generally understood," said Felspar, "that we artists are set to illustrate the poets; but the Jupiter of the *Mayfair Keepsake* has reversed all that. Mr. Woodblock has a drawing on hand of an Italian organ-boy with a monkey which he chooses to call the 'Exile,' and Vernon is the bard directed to immortalise it in a poem. His eye has been in 'a fine frenzy rolling' ever since breakfast, but he can't find a rhyme to 'exile.'"

In vain Vernon protested that his eye was all right—though not, perhaps, so much directed to the main chance as that of a certain portrait painter he could mention, and that he didn't want a rhyme to exile: Felspar avowed that he knew better, and besought the young ladies to assist his rhymeless friend. "The poem must be sent by to-morrow's post, and if you can't find a rhyme, would you be good enough to suggest an idea or two? Vernon's notion is that there should be white mice on the organ"—here they stopped on the hill to laugh, the poet as gaily as the rest—"and that the sight of them should suggest his distant home to the Italian youth and draw tears whenever he looks at them; but his difficulty—I mean Vernon's difficulty—is that he don't know and can't find out whether white mice are native products of Italy. Do either of you happen to know?"

Though Mr. Felspar addressed both the young ladies, he looked towards Ella—indeed it would almost seem, since he had never shown such high spirits before, that it was she who had inspired them—and therefore she felt called upon to reply.

"I don't know about white mice," she said; "but if I had to write a poem on such a subject—which would be a task, however, utterly beyond my powers—I should bring the boy into some such scene as this, which would remind him ever so slightly of his own mountains and blue skies."

"On the contrary," said Felspar, "you should make him feel the contrast as strongly as possible. My dear Vernon, take him into Lincolnshire, where it's all flat, and make him cry, because he has no hills to climb; because he gets beef and beer given him instead of macaroni and sour wine; because he is not devoured in this country by insects that rhyme with mice; because now and then he sees a silver coin, which I am sure he never did in Italy."

"Miss Josceline is quite right," said Vernon, interrupting this rhodomontade, "and I am much obliged to her for her suggestion."

"Perhaps she could find you a rhyme for exile," observed Anastasia, cynically; for she felt that she was no longer the first fiddle—a position which, as the only young unmarried lady in the hotel, she had hitherto enjoyed in relation to these two young men. Her remark fell flat—every one knows the effect of the reproduction of a worn-out jest—and had a sobering influence upon the little company. Presently Ella dropped a pencil out of her drawing-case, and, Vernon helping her to find it, the two fell a few paces behind the other couple.

"I hope, Miss Josceline," he said, "you don't think I do my work, poor as it is, quite so mechanically as Felspar would have you believe."

"Indeed I don't," she said, good-naturedly. "I quite understand Mr. Felspar's fun. I know, when he is serious, that he is a great admirer of your talents."

"Oh, as to that, I have next to none," he answered; "it is Felspar's way to speak more highly of his friends than they deserve, as compensation, I suppose, for his modesty as regards himself. He calls himself a portrait painter, in which line he is, indeed, best known, but he has a keen eye for the beauties of a landscape and a cunning hand for their reproduction. You must see his drawings—which are chiefly taken from the neighbourhood—at our lodgings. They are really worth a visit."

"And is there no chance of our hearing some original readings from some one else?" Ella inquired, slyly.

"No, indeed," replied the other assuringly; "there is not the least danger of such an infliction."

"I did not mean that at all," said Ella, earnestly; "you did not think I could be so rude, I hope. Indeed I should like to hear or read your poems."

"You are very kind to say so. The public, I am sorry to say, are not so civil."

"But it must be very interesting work writing stories and poems, and very pleasant to see them afterwards in print. You smile—you are thinking that women have a great deal of vanity."

"Not at all; in that respect we men—those who are authors at least—are not one whit behind the ladies. I was smiling, because, though, as you say, it is very pleasant to appear in print, my productions do not always meet with that good fortune. They are sometimes 'declined with thanks' by wicked editors."

"That must be very sad; what do you do then?"

"I smoke my pipe and think how unappreciated Keats was, and flatter myself mine is a parallel case. Then, like Bruce's spider, I try again."

"And, like him, you will at last succeed," said Ella, confidently; "when merit joins hands with perseverance success is certain."

"That's not in the copybooks," answered Vernon, smiling; "though

it sounds a little like it." Then, with a sudden change of manner, he added, "That is the honest utterance of a kind heart, and I do assure you, Miss Josceline, it has not been spoken in vain; encouragement, and from such lips, to a budding author is like the sunshine."

"Dear me, what is the matter yonder?" interrupted Ella. She was not unwilling to escape replying to a compliment so warmly worded (though, fortunately, he had dropped his voice a little, so that it was possible for her to ignore it), and there was really some excuse for her exclamation of astonishment.

Above them stood a group of people consisting of her father and Mrs. Jennynge with the walkers—who had joined them where the carriage road ceased—conversing and gesticulating in great excitement; and in the centre of them, and evidently the cause of their interruption, towered the well-known but unexpected form of Mrs. Armytage.

For the second time in the history of the Danecliff an enemy had taken possession of the hill.

CHAPTER XI.

THE PICNIC.

It had been a subject of surprise to the whole party, as they were toiling up the steep, that the men who had been sent ahead to set forth the feast upon the summit had not been visible; but the explanation of it was now afforded. Just below the summit was a deep trench, dug by the Danes, in which, sheltered from the breeze, had grown up a little copse; and here, accompanied by her somewhat unwilling ally, the Professor, Mrs. Armytage had lain or sat in ambush, and falling upon the men in charge of the provisions, had compelled them to set them down in the hollow.

"Lay the cloth here, John," she had said, imperatively, "where we shall be out of the wind. As for sitting on the top of that hill, in my present state of health, I should as soon think of flying."

John might have thought of flying, and indeed he did, but not for a moment did he think of disobeying Mrs. Armytage's behest, and the cloth was laid accordingly.

"It is rather a likely place for *Ophidia*," the Professor had murmured, but so gently that the remonstrance had been not only ineffectual, but misconceived; his lady had imagined that he was referring to the trench as being the probable habitat of some species of butterfly.

"It is every way the most convenient spot," she said; "and nobody but an idiot would have fixed upon any other."

The idiot, of course, was Mrs. Jennynge; and the counter-ordering of that lady's arrangements was, in fact, the convenience Mrs. Armytage had in her mind.

"They'll feel a little disappointed if they want a view," hazarded the Professor, looking round upon the position, which was in fact a dry ditch; "won't they!"

"Let 'em," was the laconic reply.

The frame of mind of his good lady was indeed far from conciliatory; she had not forgotten that terrible scramble up the cliffs of Wychett Cove, and the loss of her dinner at the *table d'hôte*, not to mention the physical ailments her fatigues had induced. These latter, however, it must be confessed, she had given out to be worse than they really were; she had made a shrewd guess at the state of affairs in her absence; that something like rebellion might be fermenting among her subjects, and she had resolved to recover her supremacy by a *coup d'état*. Unperceived by the rest of the household, she had stolen up with the Professor early in the morning to her place of ambush, and felt herself mistress of the situation and of her enemies.

The astonishment and chagrin of Mrs. Jennynge, on finding Mrs. Armytage in possession of the camp, was so excessive that she actually forgot to inquire after her rival's health. Environed, as she felt herself to be, by allies, and conscious of the presence of Mr. Josceline, she made for once a resolute stand against the common tyrant.

"Indeed, Mrs. Armytage, we have all set our hearts upon being on the very top of the hill."

"I don't know as to that," was the grim reply; "but I know who has set her heart upon being at the top of the tree. I am sure this is a much pleasanter spot. However, the point is," concluded Mrs. Armytage, more mildly, perceiving public feeling to be against her proposition, "am I, as an invalid, to be asked to sacrifice my health, perhaps my life, to a mere caprice? Of course I am not. We can picnic here in the shelter, and then any one that likes to climb up higher afterwards can do so." Then, arranging her garments with the decent dignity of a female Cæsar, she plumped herself down opposite a pigeon pie.

In a dispute there is nothing like action; passion is not to be compared to it for one moment; and the spectacle of Mrs. Armytage seated, and evidently about to begin operations on the provisions, decided the waverers, who were also eager for lunch, in her favour. Mrs. Jennynge, feeling that she had lost the battle, relieved her feelings by making an apology to Mr. Josceline, in whispered tones, for the behaviour of her enemy.

"All of us at the *Ultramarine* are used to Mrs. Armytage's ways," she said; "but to a stranger they must appear very extraordinary."

Mr. Josceline answered with a smile, which also did duty for the acceptance of the offer of a seat, tolerably clear of brambles, which Mrs. Armytage had made him by her side. Mrs. Jennynge promptly took up her position on the other side of him—for was it not her duty to protect him against "that terrible woman" all she could?—and the rest of the company arranged themselves mechanically, after much the same

manner as they sat at the *table d'hôte*; only they had no chairs, which to some of them made a considerable difference.

"I call it most idiotic," murmured Mr. Aird, "this coming up a hill in the heat to graze, instead of taking our luncheon comfortably."

"Still, you have an advantage over some of us," observed Mrs. Wallace, laughing, and with a glance at the old Indian's spare figure; "you can sit down on a flat place."

"Yes, but if there's no flat place; at least no clearing: there are nettles here, and roots, and sharp things," he answered, testily. "One need to be a camp-stool, and fold up, to accommodate oneself to such circumstances."

"At all events, it's much better than it would be at the top of the hill," argued Mrs. Armytage.

"You mean it would be worse there than here, ma'am? I deny it. It's hotter here than it was at Bundelcumbad."

"I thought Bundelcumbad was such a nice place," returned the lady, sarcastically; "you always say it was so much nicer than any place in England."

"I only said so of its society, madam. There, if I haven't been sitting on a flint stone, edgeways!"

"Which accounts for the sharpness of your rejoinder," observed Vernon. "How do you know that the Professor will not discover it to be an ancient flint instrument—it's just the place for it—showing unmistakably the action of fire?"

"It's just the place for *that*," grumbled Mr. Aird. "There's not a breath of air. Phew!" And he wiped his forehead with a magnificent bandanna.

"It always struck me," said the Professor, "that the ancient Romans, taking their meals, as they did, supine, and resting on one elbow, must have suffered a good deal from dyspepsia."

"Which should make us forgive them much," remarked Vernon. "For the heinous crime of having invented the Latin language, for one thing. What do you say, Davey?"

"I like it," answered the boy; "I think it's capital."

"Davey has not begun Latin yet," said Mr. Aird, hastily; "that will all come in due time; he thought you referred to the picnic. So you like it, do you, my child?" he continued, softly. "The pure air and the sunshine, eh? Yes; it's very nice."

"He said there was no air a moment ago," muttered Mrs. Armytage, scornfully. "He sees everything through that child's eyes."

"A very rose-coloured medium, at all events," observed Mr. Josceline, who perceived that Mr. Aird had overheard her; "I wish I saw everything through *my* child's eyes."

"Only Miss Josceline's are not rose-coloured," observed Felspar, smiling. "I beg her pardon, but, as a painter and on a question of tint, I must be allowed to express that opinion."

"If Felspar is so brilliant after one glass of champagne, what will he be when he has finished?" remarked Vernon, drily. "One moment, Miss Josceline; don't move, I beg."

He stooped forward, and, seizing something which she had not noticed on her foot, threw it into the air and out of sight.

"Lor! what was that? A bramble—a 'follower,' as we call it in Devonshire!" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, to whose tongue the unaccustomed champagne had perhaps given some fillip. "Well; I am sure I don't wonder at its having occurred to *her*. In my country it's thought to be an omen of good fortune, or what young ladies think to be so."

"That last limitation of your wife's is not very complimentary to you, Wallace," observed Mr. Aird, whose son's enjoyment of the feast had put in high good humour.

"But I don't believe it was a follower, as you call it, at all," observed Miss Jennynge; "I believe it was a snake."

"A snake!" exclaimed Mr. Aird, with horror, jumping to his feet, and clasping his boy in his arms.

"No, no; it was only a blindworm," said Mr. Vernon. "I threw it away, because I thought it might frighten the ladies. My dear Aird, one would really think it had been a boa constrictor."

"I *said* it was a likely spot for *Ophidia*," remarked the Professor, quietly. "If any one gets bitten, I should like to see the effect of *Curare*. I've got a little bottle of it at the hotel."

"Come along, Davey; I'll take your plate and things to the top of the hill!" exclaimed Mr. Aird, suiting the action to the word. "If the Professor likes to sacrifice himself in the cause of science, let him; *you* shall not be its victim."

"Did you ever see any one behave so ridiculously?" observed Mrs. Armytage to Mr. Josceline.

"Well really, madam, I don't know," returned that gentleman; "if there are snakes about, I don't consider them a good substitute, even at a picnic, for soup or fish. What do you say, Mr. Felspar?"

"I think we had better go," said Felspar, decisively.

"I shall stay where I am," said Mrs. Armytage, with equal firmness.

There was a moment of general hesitation; the influence of authority was very great, but in the end that of fear prevailed. In five minutes the whole party had shifted their quarters to the summit of the Dane-cliff, except the Professor and his wife. That lady had made a great mistake in putting her supremacy to a test so crucial, but, having made it, she stuck to her colours: to have gone with the rest—to sink from generalissimo to camp follower—would have been humiliation indeed.

"I am really very sorry," said Ella, "that Mrs. Armytage should have been left behind; it seems like deserting her."

"She is not 'left out in the cold,' at all events," observed Mr. Aird. "Gad! one couldn't breathe down there."

"She thoroughly deserves it for her obstinacy," remarked Mrs. Jennynge, uncompromisingly. "She was really afraid of snakes, for I saw her tuck her feet up and sitting all in a hunch as we came away; only she wouldn't own that she was wrong in having counter-ordered my directions. I confess I am only sorry for the poor Professor."

"Oh, *he* won't hurt," said Mr. Felspar, reassuringly. "He will adopt some scientific means of defence against reptiles; set fire to the grass all round him, probably."

"That will be nice for Mrs. Armytage," remarked Miss Jennynge, acidly.

"And will make it ever so much warmer," put in Mr. Aird.

"There will be salamanders as well as snakes there presently," suggested Felspar.

I am afraid there was a great deal of laughter at the dethroned lady's expense, and very little sympathy expressed for her except by Ella, who again said, "I am very sorry."

There was no doubt that the change of locality was a great improvement. The view was magnificent; and after the viands were disposed of, the two young ladies produced their sketch-books, and, under Mr. Felspar's direction, proceeded to transfer the coastguard station to paper. No doubt it was because Ella was but a beginner that he gave so much more of his attention to her work than to that of her fair companion; but, though he encouraged her, he was very far from flattering her performance.

"You will want a good deal of teaching," he said; at which Miss Jennynge threw up her head like a horse champing (though, of course, without so much noise), and remarked satirically: "I am sure she will have a very attentive tutor."

"I am glad to have so good a character from my last place," rejoined Felspar, drily. "But you must not imagine, Miss Jennynge, that you are in need of no further instruction."

"You are very complimentary, I'm sure, sir," returned the young lady, in that incisive tone which in the female indicates the presence of "temper."

"Indeed, I only meant that my poor services would be always at your disposal," said Felspar, in conciliation. But poor Ella felt very uncomfortable at this exhibition of feeling on the part of her young friend, and much hotter even than she had been in the fosse. It could not be that Miss Jennynge was seriously jealous of the painter's attention to her new acquaintance, since she herself thought as little of painters (matrimonially speaking) as of glaziers; but she had inherited from her mother an extreme objection to playing, in any orchestra whatsoever, the second fiddle. She had grown so stiff and cold that it needed an artistic touch on the part of Mr. Felspar to what he pleasantly termed "restore animation." "It seems to me, Miss Jennynge," he

said, with a critical eye upon her landscape, "that you are greatest in distance."

Ella, who noticed the double sense of the compliment, grew hotter than ever; partly with annoyance at Mr. Felspar, partly with apprehension of the effects of such a remark upon her fellow-pupil. She did not take into account the force of the vanity of art and that of nature—the weight of Pelion piled on Ossa.

"Do you really think so?" said Anastasia, with a pleased purr. "Singularly enough, Miss Josceline made a similar remark upon my drawing this very morning."

"That shows she has good judgment, though she is deficient in perspective," said Felspar, coolly. "Her weak point is your strong one. You young ladies will never be rivals in landscape drawing."

"That is quite true," said Ella, laughing, "though I don't think Miss Jennynge will thank you for such a superfluous piece of consolation."

"I am sure," said the delineator of "distance," graciously, "that after a lesson or two—that is, I mean when you have enjoyed the same advantages as myself—you will be quite as clever at it, except, perhaps, as to the sky line, as I am."

"Yes; you are not good at sky line, Miss Josceline," said Felspar, gravely, "but you will do very well at figure drawing. Those little people in the foreground are first-rate. You must go in for that; we'll get some noble model to draw from. There's the Professor yonder, come up from the ditch for a breath of fresh air: draw *him*."

"By-the-bye, where's Mr. Vernon?" exclaimed Miss Jennynge.

"I'll tell him you said 'by-the-bye,'" said Felspar, "in connection with 'a noble model.' I don't know anything more likely to please him. He is very proud of his figure, I can tell you."

"You have not, however, told us what has become of him," said Ella, anxiously, her quick ear perceiving at once the difference between badinage and evasion. "I noticed he was looking very pale just now; is he unwell?"

"No, no; that is, he is not quite well. The heat of the fosse, I fancy, affected him."

"You are deceiving us, Mr. Felspar," said Ella, putting down her sketch-book; "it was not the heat. I suspected it from the very first, though he concealed it so courageously. That was an adder he took up, and it has bitten him."

"Oh, la; I hope not!" exclaimed Miss Jennynge, with a pretty little shudder."

"Well, yes; it *was* an adder," said Felspar, reluctantly; "I knew it at the time, but he particularly told me to say nothing about it; and if I had not insisted upon his going to the doctor's to be looked to, he would have been here now. Old Cooper has set him to rights by this time, you may depend upon it. He will be dreadfully annoyed if any fuss is made."

But Ella had already risen. "Papa," she exclaimed, "Mr. Vernon has been bitten by the adder that he took off my boot, and has gone home ill!"

At this, Mr. Josceline, who was paying his attentions to Mrs. Jennynge, withdrew them, though scarcely with such promptitude as the occasion would seem to demand.

"Dear me, Ella; you don't say so?"

"How shocking!" ejaculated Mrs. Jennynge; "why, the piece will have to be cut out, and then burnt with a hot iron, won't it?"

"It would be no use burning the piece," said Felspar, grimly.

"How unfeeling you are, Mr. Felspar!" cried Miss Jennynge, reprovingly. She did not understand that it was disgust at the selfishness of her mother's remark, not want of sympathy with his friend, that had evoked his scorn.

"But if something of that kind is not done," pursued the old lady, "he'll go mad, won't he?"

"Yes," said Felspar; "when he comes to the *table d'hôte* and barks, it will be a sign that he is dangerous."

"Yes, yes; I see all that," said Mr. Josceline, to whom his daughter had meantime been speaking in low but earnest tones: "of course, he was very kind; but I'm hanged if I can see how I can help him, unless I seek the place, like Queen Eleanor."

"I assure you it's quite unnecessary that you should leave us," said Mrs. Jennynge, annoyed at the prospect of losing her cavalier.

"If you don't go, papa," whispered Ella into her father's astonished ear, "I shall go myself."

For one instant a frown like night came over Mr. Josceline's face. Then he answered lightly, "Very well, dear; since you think it is the right thing to do, I'll go at once."

And he went.

"I hope no one else will go," said Felspar, quietly, "because I know it will annoy Vernon. If it had not been for that, I should myself, I hope, have been the first to go."

He said this in so low a tone that it would almost seem to be intended for Ella's ear rather than for a public apology for his conduct, then added cheerfully, "Come, let us go on with our drawing-lesson."

Miss Jennynge dutifully resumed her sketch-book, but Ella drew no more: she said her fingers shook, which, indeed, they did (though not from cold), as Felspar perceived. He thought some people—those who got bitten by snakes, for instance—had great luck. Presently, seeing Ella unoccupied, little Davey stole down to her from his father's side, and slipped his hand into hers.

"Papa says I must not go to Mr. Vernon," he whispered, "because Mrs. Jennynge says he'll bite. But I don't think he'd bite *me*. I'm very sorry he's hurt; ain't you?"

Ella did not answer him directly ; but she put her arm round his neck and kissed him. " You are a good, dear child," she said. Felspar, who saw the action, though he did not hear the words, thought that some boys, too, had great luck.

Then after an hour or so, dashed with melancholy caused by Vernon's misfortune, and which, after the fun of the picnic, seemed somewhat of the nature of a bathos, the party returned to the hotel, whither the Professor and his wife had already preceded them.

CHAPTER XII.

A COUPLE OF PATIENTS.

DR. COOPER'S house, though situated in the High Street of Wallington, was, to some eyes that from time to time beheld it, quite an ideal place of residence. It was small and low, but eminently comfortable, and, being of ancient red brick and overgrown with creepers, had a most picturesque appearance. The two bow windows of what the Doctor called his parlour and his study—which were also his dining-room and drawing-room—looked out upon an old-fashioned flower-garden, which, all the summer through, smelt more deliciously than the best scent-shop in Bond Street. At one end of it was a sort of temple, set on a little hill, dedicated to the divine weed, where, after his day's work was done, the good Esculapius would sit and smoke, with his eyes on the Ocean and his thoughts on the Infinite—or sometimes only on his longest cases. His best cures, he was wont to say, were wrought out in this place of retirement. His visits to patients were brief, and his way with them so prompt and decisive that, to strangers, and especially to those who had little the matter with them, he appeared curt and careless ; whereas he was, in fact, the most painstaking of physicians. How he lived—though it was in homely fashion—was a wonder to many, for his practice lay chiefly among the poor, to whom he was known at least as much as an almsgiver as a medical adviser. When remonstrated with by his friends upon a charity so out of all proportion to his means, he would argue that he gave nothing but professional assistance ; " it is not the drugs from my dispensary," he would say, " of which the good people are in need, but beef from my larder and soup from my kitchen ; it is no use my ordering them port wine, don't you see, unless I send them a bottle."

I sometimes think that in heaven there will be a particularly pleasant spot set aside for good doctors ; and, if I am right, John Cooper of Wallington will have one of the snuggest corners there. On earth, from the circumstance of his blunt manners and the use of a strong provincial dialect, he was not appreciated generally by the upper classes until they had found the value of his services. And he was so absurdly conscientious that, if they only fancied they needed them, he was wont

to tell them so. Otherwise he would have made a much better income out of society generally, and of the hotel company in particular, among whom there were often hypochondriacs, and those professional invalids who to the doctor are what litigious people are to the lawyer. Moreover, when called in to a serious case, but one in which he knew medicine would not avail, instead of trying interesting experiments, which expand the purse if not the mind, he would frankly say, "I can do nothing for you." Such a case he had had under his charge for four-and-twenty hours quite recently; and his payment—a voluntary one—had been unusually large; viz. a five-pound note and this remark, delivered with a sigh, "Dr. Cooper, you are an honest man, I fear."

This was true, yet the Doctor had his weaknesses. He was an amateur mathematician, and had constructed a system of logarithms, which did not take much more than double the time for computation than was expended in the usual method; he had even the reputation of "corresponding with Le Verrier," though his enemies asserted that the correspondence had consisted in his having addressed one letter to the astronomer to which the latter had not replied.

On the day of the picnic the Doctor was enjoying an after-dinner pipe in his bower when he beheld Vernon coming up to him through the garden. The young man often dropped in for a chat in the evening "to suck his brains," as the host averred, and certainly some of the Doctor's experiences had afterwards appeared (well disguised and with his full consent) in print; but the young man was, indeed, a great favourite with him, and brought with him at least as much as he took away. A visit from him so early in the day was, however, unusual; and the Doctor perceived at once that something was amiss, though he affected simplicity.

"Oh, come ye for peace here, or come ye for war?" he quoted, gaily; "do I behold a friend, or a wretch in quest of literary copy?"

"Neither, my good sir; nor yet 'to dance at your bridal,' replied the young man, concluding the quotation, "though I hope to do that some day." ["An impudent young dog," muttered the Doctor.] "I am come for your professional advice."

"Is it the heartache?"

"No; the fact is I have been bitten in the hand."

"By a dog?" exclaimed the Doctor, speaking quickly, but quietly, and rising from his seat for the first time.

"No; by a viper; it came uninvited to our picnic on the Danecliff, and when I picked it up to throw it away it did this"—and he exhibited his wounded hand, which had already begun to swell.

"Um; fingers were made before forks it is true, but they are not so long. If I had been you, I should have taken that viper up with a salad fork."

"There was no time; the reptile was crawling on a young lady's foot."

The Doctor executed a soft but prolonged whistle. "Then I was right," he said, "as I generally am, in my first diagnosis; both hand *and* heart are affected. You shake your head, which goes for nothing; and you turn very red, which is a most significant symptom. Now let me look at the hand."

They were in the surgery by this time, which was at the back of the house, and the Doctor at once commenced his ministrations.

"If you had been a child, this might have been dangerous," he observed; "but grown-up persons are seldom much hurt by these things. It will cripple you for a day or two for all that, if I am not mistaken."

"Confound it! and I have to write some verses within twenty-four hours for a magazine."

"Dictate 'em to the young lady that bit you—I mean who was the cause of your being bitten. Make 'em very tender; heart, smart; love, dove; mine, thine. That will give you a capital opportunity; and will also put to shame the people who found their arguments against the benevolence of the scheme of creation upon the fact that the viper is harmful and of no use."

"I have found it very useful professionally," said Vernon, gravely. "As a metaphor for a villain it is invaluable. If he is also a mathematician," he added slyly, "I use a synonym, and call him an adder."

The surgeon laughed, and, as was his custom, so uproariously, that a polite knock at the door escaped the notice of both doctor and patient. The next moment Mr. Josceline entered the room.

"I beg your pardon, Dr. Cooper, but the servant-girl told me to walk in. I came to inquire after a sick friend, and am delighted to find him laughing, like Mother Hubbard's dog in the ballad."

"It was *my* laugh," said the Doctor, somewhat disconcerted, and conscious, doubtless, that a guffaw was scarcely a professional incident in a surgical operation. "The fact is, our young friend here is a little depressed by his misfortune; thinks a snake-bite likely to produce hydrophobia—now, my good sir," this to Vernon, who was about to enter his protest against so atrocious a misrepresentation, "you mustn't excite yourself, or you'll have lock-jaw."

For a moment Mr. Josceline looked puzzled, but in the next he was in full possession of the state of affairs. The rough humour of the Doctor was as foreign to any mental attribute of his own as were the high spirits of Vernon; but he could understand them both.

"I suppose," he said, in the philosophic tone he could adopt with the same ease as another would use a toothpick, "you find in sickness even more than in health that 'a merry heart goes all the way, while a sad one tires in a mile-a-'"

"That is certainly my experience, Mr. Josceline," returned the Doctor; for, though he had never spoken to his visitor before, the latter was already known by report to every one in Wallington. "'Tis the light heart that

makes the good patient ; but I hope our young friend here will not have to draw much upon his resources in the way of liveliness to get over this bout. To the adult, as I was telling him, the bite of the viper is not very formidable."

"I am, nevertheless, greatly obliged to him for having, to his own damage, rescued my daughter from such a calamity," said Mr. Josceline, warmly. "Without making too much of it, which I am sure he would not wish me to do, I must needs say it was an unselfish act, very promptly and opportunely done. I thank him for it in my daughter's name, as well as my own."

There was little to be found fault with in Mr. Josceline's words, albeit they did not quite give the impression of being extempore, while the manner of speaking them was perfection. But it did not escape Vernon's notice that they were addressed to him somewhat indirectly and in the presence of a third person. To his sensitive mind this seemed to imply that Mr. Josceline was inclined to make the obligation referred to as little private and personal as possible.

"You are quite right, Mr. Josceline," he replied, gravely, "in thinking I did not wish to make much of what I did ; nor was there in the service itself anything worthy of remark, since any one in my place must needs have performed it. I hope you will not think it necessary to further allude to it."

"One would really think our young friend was Mithridates, king of Pontus," observed Mr. Josceline, gaily ; "so lightly does he seem to hold being poisoned."

"He doesn't make such a fuss about it as Cleopatra, certainly," remarked the Doctor, drily ; "but an adder's fang is not to be trifled with, and the sooner he gets home, and lies up a bit, the better—and you will wear that sling, young man, till further orders."

As Vernon rose to go, "You must give me your left hand," said Mr. Josceline, kindly ; "though you can't give me your right. Both my daughter and I will do ourselves the pleasure of calling on you to-morrow to make inquiries."

A flush of pleasure came over the young man's face in spite of his effort to appear unmoved.

"I am sure that is not necessary, Mr. Josceline," he said ; "though such a visit would, indeed, be welcome, however undeserved. There are some of Mr. Felspar's paintings, however, at our lodgings, which, since Miss Josceline is herself an artist, may, perhaps, repay her for her trouble."

The allusion was unfortunate, as we, who are in possession of Mr. Josceline's views of his daughter's taste for art, are well aware ; but the man of the world merely smiled acquiescence, and bade adieu to his young acquaintance with much graciousness and warmth. The resentment Vernon had showed in the first instance had, curiously enough, made a favourable impression on Mr. Josceline ; he was glad to find that the

young fellow had some pride of his own, for he knew it was easier to deal with such a man in relation to his affections (and his admiration of Ella had not escaped her father's eye) than with those who agree with the scripture that "before honour is humility."

"I hope there is really nothing to fear with regard to Mr. Vernon," said Mr. Josceline, as soon as the patient had left the room.

"I think I may honestly say, Nothing," replied the Doctor, to whom it seemed natural enough, though kind withal, that the other should have remained behind to ask the question. "It is a great point in his favour, as you were saying, that he is not of the melancholy sort. Now, I've got a patient—not a hundred miles away—who, if his great toe aches, thinks not only that he is going to die of it, but that the world is going to fall to pieces."

"His name begins with an E, does it not?" observed Mr. Josceline, smiling.

"Well, yes," answered the Doctor, somewhat repenting of his particularity; for it was contrary to his habit to eke out his remarks, as only too many doctors do, by illustrations drawn from his own practice; "but how is it possible that you, who are a stranger here, should have guessed that?"

"Oh, I know Mr. Edward, at least by reputation," said Mr. Josceline. "I notice, by-the-bye, that about here they call him Edwards!"

"Which would drive him frantic if he knew it," laughed the Doctor; "fortunately, however, he never hears what folks say."

"Just so; he lives the life of a recluse, does he not?"

"Absolutely; he sees no one in the neighbourhood except myself, nor even me save when he imagines himself (which, however, is pretty often) at the point of death. At ordinary times when I am sent for, I am interviewed by his secretary, who details his highness's symptoms as if they were his own; and I prescribe for them accordingly."

"Do you not think he is touched in his head?" inquired Mr. Josceline, carelessly.

The Doctor shrugged his shoulders. "As he is a rich man, one must call him 'peculiar,' or 'eccentric;' if he were a poor man,—well, between ourselves, I think he would be put into the County Lunatic Asylum."

"It is fortunate for him that he has no relatives to put him in a private madhouse," observed Mr. Josceline, with unwonted grimness.

"That is not *his* opinion," said the Doctor, drily; who, having been betrayed into frankness by the other's seeming acquaintance with the subject in question, now once more seemed inclined to draw in his horns.

"Just so; that he has not been blessed by children seems to him, I dare say, not so much a private calamity," continued the other, "as a public misfortune."

"I see you know all about it," answered the Doctor, in a tone that seemed to imply, "and since you do so, there is nothing more to tell."

"But do you mean to say, Doctor," pursued Mr. Josceline, "that our friend up at the castle yonder"—and he threw his hand out in the direction of Barton—"does actually see no one but his secretary and yourself?"

"No other man, as I believe."

There was a long pause, which the Doctor did not seem at all inclined to break; he felt that he had made a mistake in speaking of the private affairs of a patient, and especially of one who was solicitous to keep them private.

"And does this seclusion apply also, Doctor, to the other sex?"

"To tell you the truth, Mr. Josceline, I don't feel at liberty to give you any more information upon the subject, unless you can assure me that you have some reason beyond mere curiosity for inquiring into it."

"The question I have just put, Doctor, shall be my last one," returned the other, earnestly; "and I give you my word of honour that, whatever your reply may be, it shall never be repeated to any human being."

"Well, then, there is a lady at the castle who enjoys Mr. Edward's complete confidence. I should add," he continued, gravely—for a mocking and contemptuous smile had suddenly distorted Mr. Josceline's aristocratic features—"that not a breath of scandal attaches to Miss Burt's position in that gentleman's household. She is, I am convinced, an excellent good woman, though she has suffered, I have every reason to believe, some severe misfortune, the nature of which I cannot guess, but which, I will venture to assert, has been unmerited."

Mr. Josceline waved his hand in token of assent, but his face darkened, and its expression became curiously hard and set.

"You must excuse my earnestness," continued the Doctor, "but I respect Miss Burt, and appreciate the delicate position in which she is necessarily placed; and as to Mr. Edward himself, I feel that where a man—though it may be through his own fault—has so many circumstances against him, and which tender to foster gossip and scandal, it is one's duty to put him right with others, where one can—— Drink this at once; the whole of it!"

While the Doctor had been speaking he had moved, still keeping his eye fixed on his companion, to a cupboard behind him, from which he produced a bottle of brandy and a wine glass, which he filled to the brim.

"Don't speak; that's well; your colour is coming back again."

"I am dying; I suffocate," moaned the other; his lips were blue; his hands were pressed tightly to his side; his face depicted the throes of some inward agony.

"On the contrary, you are getting better."

"If that breast-pang is to come again, I had rather die," murmured Mr. Josceline.

"It will not come again," answered the Doctor, quietly; "at least, not now," he added, with conscientious reluctance. "You have had it before, I conclude?"

Mr. Josceline moved his head in assent. There was a silence for a little, and then the patient began to smile pleasantly, but very feebly, like a wintry sun.

"What poor creatures we are, Doctor, when anything goes wrong with this complicated mechanism of ours! I feel that I have made a most distressing exhibition of myself. The sight of that adder—so near my dear Ella—gave me a turn, and perhaps I came down the hill quicker than was necessary; and, you see, my heart is weak. Pray forgive me."

The Doctor regarded him with gravity. Mr. Josceline reminded him of Lord Chesterfield *in extremis* with his "Give Dayrelles a chair," and his honest nature resented such politeness as out of place.

"It is my duty," said he, earnestly, "to tell you that you will require great care, Mr. Josceline; very great care. I can do little for you; but you must avoid excitement of all kinds, or we shall have a repetition of this scene which has distressed you so much."

"It was touch and go, Doctor, was it?" inquired the other, with a seriousness as strangely foreign to the phrase, as the phrase itself was to the speaker's usual manner of expressing himself.

"Yes; if you put it that way, it was almost 'go!'"

"Poor Ella!"

Mr. Josceline's voice was full of pathos. To one who knew him well it was difficult to believe that he could have uttered such words and in such a tone. Presently he spoke again.

"You will say nothing of this unpleasant incident, I feel sure, doctor; I have never been mistaken yet—to use a phrase from your own profession—in my diagnosis of a gentleman."

"The term is very vague," returned the other, smiling; "but you may trust me so far. The secrets of the consulting-room are as the secrets of the confessional. You must not think because I spoke so openly of Mr. Edward and of Miss Burt (who, indeed, is no patient of mine) that I am given to gossip—I'll just open the window; that's well; now you look yourself again."

For a moment Mr. Josceline had not looked himself, nor anything like it. The Doctor's practised eye had detected certain premonitory symptoms of a second attack; but these, again, had passed away. "Half a glass more of this will do you no harm; unless, indeed, you are unused to alcohol."

"I have drunk like a fish in my time," replied Mr. Josceline, frankly.

"I dare say," was the Doctor's rejoinder, delivered in so naïve a tone, that the patient answered, smiling:—

"You are thinking to yourself that I have probably done everything else, in my time, that I should not have done."

"It is my impression that you have tried your constitution pretty severely," answered the Doctor, evasively. "And, I warn you," he continued, earnestly, "you must try it no more."

"Indeed, I have no intention, Doctor," sighed Mr. Josceline; "it is such a mistake that we don't all begin life at sixty years of age. Then we should be so irreproachable."

"I don't agree with you; many would be born misers, for one thing."

"Let the galled jade wince; that doesn't touch me, I assure you, Doctor, since I was never distinguished as an economist. By-the-bye, that reminds me—what am I indebted to you for saving my life; for I well understand that you have done no less."

"My dear sir, the glass of brandy you drank, it is true, is very old," answered the Doctor, gravely; "at the *Ultramarine* you would have given a shilling for it. But I am not licensed to sell spirituous liquors, and, therefore, can charge you nothing."

"But that is Quixotic," remonstrated Mr. Josceline; "moreover, if I want a doctor in future, what am I to do?"

"Oh, if you send for me professionally, of which I hope there will be no need, that is another matter. Then it will be 'Charge, Chester, charge,' with a vengeance. Good-bye, my dear sir, and take care of yourself."

"A very serious case, that," murmured the Doctor, when the other had departed. "It must have been no ordinary matter that so moved him; the attack took place, too, when he was apparently quite calm. Sixty years of age? No; he has not seen fifty, and I very much doubt," he added, with a drop of the voice, "if he ever will see it."

CHAPTER XIII.

A SUGGESTION.

THE position of a bore in society is not so fixed as it is commonly supposed to be. He is by no means generally disliked, or it would be impossible that he should be so universally tolerated. The fact is, dull people, of whom there is a fair sprinkling in the world, are not so annoyed by him as they pretend to be, and have, secretly, a fellow-feeling for him. Bores, indeed, remind me of nothing so much as organ-grinders, who, though abused on all hands, are, in fact, looked upon with disfavour by only a few unfortunates with delicate nerves, on whom their grinding has the effect of slow torture. There are some circumstances, however, —when, for example, they are suffering from severe calamities or physical pain,—in which even the most commonplace and conventional of men resent the attentions of a bore as though they were pests; and the same thing takes place with those men of the world who pride themselves

most upon their external civility to this class of parasite ; when they arehipped and out of sorts their patience gives way, and they can be as rude as anybody—or ruder. Thus it happened to Mr. Josceline himself, when, on leaving the Doctor's house with his mind full of many things, and none of them pleasant, and with his body by no means in a satisfactory condition, he found himself suddenly in the society of Mrs. Armytage. She had gone into the village to make some little purchases, and was returning to the hotel alone when the good fortune occurred to her of meeting the very companion she most desired.

"Well, this *is* pleasant!" she exclaimed, "and the more so because so unexpected. I do hope you took no hurt, my dear Mr. Josceline, from that imprudent adjournment to the top of the Danecliff. You are not strong, you know, and really you look far from well. I believe you feel a cold coming."

Mr. Josceline felt worse things than colds coming. The warning he had just received had been of a most serious and unmistakable kind, and it was not the first. In spite of himself and of all his usual habits and modes of thought, he had been brought suddenly face to face with a certain ghastly reality which, sooner or later, obtrudes itself on the attention of gentlemen of the highest fashion.

When an earthquake has taken place close to one's feet, and another shock is imminent, the buzzing of a bottle fly in one's ear is of no account ; yet, if it settles on one's nose, one must do something. Mr. Josceline made at first some polite and mechanical rejoinder to Mrs. Armytage's tittle-tattle ; but her "weak, washy, everlasting flood" of words was, in the end, too much for him.

"Anybody can see you are not well, Mr. Josceline ; much more one who, like myself, has some powers of observation ; and who also, I may be allowed to say, takes a personal interest in your welfare. To sit down on the top of that hill, of all places in the world to dine, was really an act of madness. If you had stopped in the hollow, as I suggested——"

"Do you know what happened, madam, through your choice of that situation?" interrupted Mr. Josceline, gravely. "Mr. Vernon has been bitten by a snake."

"Dear me! You don't say so! Why, I heard him with my own ears say it was a blindworm."

"That was because he did not wish to alarm you ladies ; he was bitten very badly, and Dr. Cooper has just dressed the wound."

"I don't think much of Dr. Cooper," replied the lady. "I dare say he has never so much as heard of such a remedy, but a little olive-oil, with wool to exclude the air, is a sovereign remedy for snake-bites."

"Then, for Heaven's sake, madam, go to Mr. Vernon and tell him so. I think, under the circumstances, he has a right to expect it."

"Do you really?" replied the lady, doubtfully. "If *you* are not a judge of what is right, dear Mr. Josceline, I don't know who can be

qualified ; and though I am scarcely on visiting terms with the young gentleman"—here she drew herself up, as if by that movement she would have indicated her superior position in the social scale—"rather than fall short in such a matter, I will take the oil to him myself."

"Then you will very literally be a Good Samaritan," said Mr. Josceline.

He got rid of her with a smile and a bow, and she parted from him with the same symbols of courtesy. But the one never knew how very near the edge of a volcano she had been treading, while the other was equally unconscious of danger, through having underrated the intelligence, or rather the susceptibilities, of his late companion.

Mrs. Armytage could see when she was not wanted (when she chose to see it) as well as another ; and though she had departed upon an errand of charity, her feelings were scarcely in consonance with it. If Mr. Josceline had not been a sprig of nobility, she would have let him know what she thought of his conduct ; but, as it was, he hung too high. With the commonalty in almost open revolt against her sway, she could not afford to quarrel with a personage so exalted : and, indeed, in order to show how far from quarrel were her thoughts, she sent Mr. Josceline a present, or rather a token of her solicitude, that very afternoon.

He was in his room alone, having placed his daughter, when he left the Danecliff, in the care of Mrs. Jennynge, who, contrary to Ella's wishes (for she was naturally anxious to hear of Mr. Vernon), had, after their return to the hotel, taken her out for a walk in company with Anastasia ; so that he was quite alone when Mrs. Armytage's own maid came in with her mistress's compliments and one of the very hottest linseed poultices that had ever been seen so far from the fire. The cook, she said, had forgotten to send it on the previous day, but Mrs. Armytage hoped and trusted it would still be found useful.

"You may put it down," was the very mitigated expression of thanks with which Mr. Josceline received it ; and, on the handmaiden's departure, I am sorry to be obliged to add, that, with an ejaculation which nothing but the state of his health could have excused, the invalid dropped it out of window. Nor was even this the worst of it ; for Mrs. Armytage's Fido happening to be upon the grass-plot beneath, in search of unconsidered trifles, he snapped the poultice up without having taken the precaution to blow upon it, or having the patience to let it cool, whereupon arose such howls of agony as brought out the whole establishment of the hotel. As the plate, however, had not been thrown out, and poor Fido could not explain the nature of his malady, he was treated for fits, and no one but himself was any the wiser.

Under other circumstances, such a catastrophe could not have failed to be agreeable to one with so strong a sense of humour as Mr. Josceline, but that gentleman, as may well be imagined, was in no mood for mirth. He had, indeed, sent his daughter from him from the sense of his own disability to conceal the melancholy that consumed him. Though he

was far from thinking with the French nobleman that the Creator would "think twice before d——ing a person of his quality," the Hon. George Emilius Josceline had no vulgar fears of death, but he had fears of what might happen afterwards—to somebody else. The picture of his Ella, friendless, fortuneless, and forlorn, presented itself to his mind in sombre but distinct colours. It had, as we know, occurred to him before, but never with such sharpness of outline. To do him justice, though he entertained some vague thoughts of reparation, he had none of absolution; it did not strike him that by any sacrifice of self at this, the fag end of a wasted existence, he might benefit his own soul. If he was destitute of the religious sense, he was also free from the inconsistent egotism that too often accompanies it. He had lived for Self, it is true, throughout his life; but, for once, Love had vanquished Self. He was like a man who, conscious that his time is short, but with no anxiety for his spiritual concerns, makes haste to make his will. Only, in his case, though so solicitous to make provision for another, there was nothing to leave; it was, however, possible, if time were given to him, to make, as it were, a deed of gift; to bestow something upon the beloved object in his lifetime that might be of service to her after his own departure. It was no wonder that he was full of thought; and what made the matter still more grave was, that, notwithstanding its pressing character, it was absolutely necessary for him to conceal its urgency from all concerned, and from Ella most of all. If she should once grasp the real condition of affairs, her father well understood that she would be constituting herself the nurse and devoted companion of a sick man; whereas he had quite other views both for her and the patient in question.

After an hour or two of solitude, during which he sat at the open window, gazing out on sky and sea, the beauty of which, perhaps, mingled with his thoughts and influenced them in a manner he little suspected, he arrived at a certain conclusion; not a very good one, or perhaps, albeit it had paternal love for its basis, a high-principled one, but, nevertheless, such as seemed to him feasible and sufficient. By the time Ella returned he had, to all outward appearance, recovered himself, as was clear from her at once addressing him with respect to the health of another.

"Well, papa; how is Mr. Vernon? Mrs. Jennynge walks so slowly that I thought we should never have got home, and all the time I was torturing myself with the notion that he might be very ill."

"No, no; there is very little the matter, though I thought it civil to say we would call and inquire after him to-morrow; a slight swelling of the hand, and a little pain, which the doctor assures me will abate to-morrow. There was no occasion to distress yourself: I hope you did not evince any impatience of the society of your companions."

"I hope not, indeed, papa; Mrs. Jennynge was very kind to me, though I am not so conceited as to suppose it was for my own sake. You have no idea how she was singing your praises."

"She is a woman of excellent judgment," returned Mr. Josceline, smiling; "and her daughter? Did she join in the chorus?"

"Well; she was not so enthusiastic as her mamma, of course. That would not have been what that lady would have called *comme il faut*, or in accordance with *les convenances*."

It was with a very good-natured laugh that Ella thus alluded to Mrs. Jennynge's weakness for the French tongue, but Mr. Josceline did not echo it; nay, it was even with a slight air of reproof that he replied: "She is a very kindly and well disposed woman, Ella; and does not presume upon her wealth, as many persons would do in her position. I have reason to believe that she is very rich."

"Indeed?" said Ella, indifferently; "I wonder, then, that the daughter—being such an heiress—should have remained unmarried so long."

"Yes; that is strange, for she is not bad-looking."

"Her style of dress is a little too fashionable, don't you think, papa?"

"Well; it is at all events unsuitable for Wallington Bay. If you could give her a little friendly advice on the matter, it would be a charity. They evidently feel inclined to cultivate our acquaintance, and, though they may not be quite to our own taste, I have lived too long in the world to reject the friendly advances of honest people."

The sentiment, no doubt, was an admirable one; yet, somehow, in her father's mouth it sounded strange.

"But, my dear papa, I thought to-day you rather discouraged Mrs. Armytage. And though she is rather vulgar, I do believe she is well-meaning."

"No doubt she is, and that is a great misfortune. If such people were not well-meaning they would not be tolerated at all. I wish they would let well alone; she has just sent me a linseed poultice, which Fido has taken internally." And he narrated the incident in a manner that amused Ella exceedingly. "By Jingo," he added, "how Mr. Aird does hate that woman!"

"Yes; I am quite sorry about it; he and Davey joined us when we were out walking, and inveighed against her so that I felt obliged to be her partisan."

"That is a piece of quite unnecessary knight-errantry," observed Mr. Josceline, gravely. "Mr. Aird is a better judge of human nature than you are, my dear. Underneath his somewhat rough exterior, unless I am much mistaken, are a wise head and a warm heart."

"As to the latter, I am quite convinced of it, papa; his devotion to his boy is quite touching."

"Yes; and when such strong affection is manifested for one object, the capabilities of it, at all events, exist for others. His lad is delicate, I fear."

"I am afraid so, papa."

"How came Mr. Aird to join company with you?" inquired Mr. Josceline, after a long silence, during which he appeared deep in thought. "It did not strike me that Mrs. Jennynge was a favourite of his."

"Well, I believe that I was the attraction—that is, of course, to Davey. The little fellow has taken quite a fancy to me, and, seeing me walking with the others, he ran up to us, and his father followed him. The two have only just left us to make inquiries at Clover Cottage."

"And where is Clover Cottage?"

"What, have you not been there? That is where Mr. Felspar and Mr. Vernon live."

"No. I saw Mr. Vernon at the Doctor's. I remember now, he told me he lived in lodgings. That must be wretched work in a place like Wallington; but, to be sure, it signifies nothing to a bachelor. The worst of it is that a man of that kind, through ignorance rather than selfishness, often imagines that what is good enough for himself is good enough for his wife."

"But is Mr. Vernon going to be married?"

"I am sure I don't know; I am only speaking in general terms; though, by-the-bye, I think his friend Felspar, who seems to be situated in much the same position, has an eye to Miss Jennynge. In that case, however, supposing you are right about her being an heiress, there is nothing to be said, as she will have enough for two."

"I think, dear papa, your sagacity is for once at fault," said Ella, quietly. "From what I have seen of Mr. Felspar, I judge him to have too much pride to be dependent upon his wife."

"Then all I can say is, it is false pride," returned Mr. Josceline, dogmatically. "As to his own ideas upon the matter, they don't concern me in the least; but I should be sorry, my dear Ella, if you were to be misled by conventional views upon this subject. They proceed, in the first place, from the vulgar supposition that money is everything, and that there is no equivalent for it; whereas there are a great many equivalents. For example, if Mr. Felspar is a man of genius, he would give as much as he got, even though he married an heiress or even a millionairess."

"I quite agree with you there, papa, I'm sure."

"Of course you do; everybody with common sense must do so. Similarly, a man of rank, but of small means, is not to be accused of greed if, as the phrase goes, he 'marries money.' What he needs, it is true, his wife is possessed of; but also, if she is not of such good family, *vice versa*. And it is the same with a young lady, whether of birth or beauty (and, of course, this is still more the case when she is possessed of both), who marries a rich man older than herself. The disparity in years is fully made up to her by the advantages of his social position; and indeed, taking marriages all round, I am inclined to think that these are the happiest of all unions."

It was not likely that Ella would have expressed any view of her own in antagonism to her father's experience ; but, at this juncture, the gong gave note of the preparation for the *table d'hôte*, and it is certain she felt a sense of relief in obeying its summons, and escaping from the further development of his social philosophy. It was not only that his treating of such topics was a thing new and strange, but his tone and manner had an earnestness altogether foreign to his character, and such as gave the thing discoursed of a personal application which embarrassed her, she knew not why.

Sir George Etheredge.

A NEGLECTED CHAPTER OF ENGLISH LITERATURE.

THAT Sir George Etheredge wrote three plays which are now even less read than the rank and file of Restoration drama, and that he died at Ratisbon, at an uncertain date, by falling down the stairs of his own house and breaking his neck after a banquet, these are the only particulars which can be said to be known, even to students of literature, concerning the career of a very remarkable writer. I shall endeavour to show in the following pages that the entire neglect of the three plays is an unworthy return for the singular part they enjoyed in the creation of modern English comedy; and I shall be able to prove that the one current anecdote of Etheredge's life has no foundation in fact whatever. At the same time I shall have the satisfaction of printing, mainly for the first time, and from MS. sources, a mass of biographical material which makes this dramatist, hitherto the shadowiest figure of his time, perhaps the one poet of the Restoration of whose life and character we know the most. The information I refer to has been culled from two or three fields. Firstly, from the incidental references to the author scattered in the less-known writings of his contemporaries; secondly, from an article published in 1750, and from MS. notes still unprinted, both from the pen of that "busy, curious, thirsty fly" of polite letters, the antiquarian Oldys; but mostly, and with far the greatest confidence, from a volume in the Manuscript Room of the British Museum, entitled *The Letterbook* of Sir George Etheredge, while he was Envoy Extraordinary at Ratisbon. This volume, which is in the handwriting of an un-named secretary, contains drafts of over one hundred letters from Etheredge, in English and French, a certain number of letters addressed to him by famous persons, some of his accounts, a hudibrastic poem on his character, and, finally, some extremely caustic letters, treacherously written by the secretary, to bring his master into bad odour in England. I cannot understand how so very curious and important, a miscellany has hitherto been overlooked. It was bought by the British Museum in 1837, and, as far as I can find out, has been never referred to, or made use of in any way. It abounds with historical and literary allusions of great interest, and, as far as Etheredge is concerned, is simply a mine of wealth. Having premised so much, I will endeavour to put together, as concisely as possible, what I have been able to collect from all these sources.

On January 9, 1686, Etheredge addressed to the Earl of Middleton an epistle in octosyllabics, which eventually, in 1704, was printed in his

Works. Readers of Dryden will recollect that a letter in verse to Sir George Etheredge by that poet has always been included in Dryden's poems, and that it begins :—

To you who live in chill degree,
As map informs, of fifty-three,
And do not much for cold atone
By bringing thither fifty-one.

That Etheredge was fifty-one at the date of this epistle has hitherto been of little service to us, since we could not tell when that letter was composed. *The Letterbook*, however, in giving us the date of Etheredge's epistle, to which Dryden's poem was an immediate answer, supplies us with an important item. If Etheredge was fifty-one in the early spring of 1686, he must have been born in 1634 or the first months of 1635. He was, therefore, a contemporary of Dryden, Roscommon, and Dorset, rather than, as has always been taken for granted, of the younger generation of Wycherley, Shadwell, and Rochester. Nothing is known of his family. Gildon, who knew him, reported that he belonged to an old Oxfordshire family, and, therefore, may probably have been a descendant of Dr. George Etheredge, the famous Greek and Hebrew scholar, who died about 1590, and whose family estate was at Thame. Oldys very vaguely conjectures that our dramatist was educated at Cambridge. Gildon states that for a little while he studied the law, but adds, what external and internal evidence combine to prove, that he spent much of his early manhood in France. My own impression is that from about 1658 to 1663 he was principally in Paris. His French, in prose and verse, is as fluent as his English ; and his plays are full of allusions that show him to be intimately at home in Parisian matters. What in the other Restoration playwrights seems a Gallic affectation seems nature in him. My reason for supposing that he did not arrive in London at the Restoration, but a year or two later, is that he appears to have been absolutely unknown in London until his *Comical Revenge* was acted ; and also because he shows in that play an acquaintance with the new school of French comedy. He seems to have possessed means of his own, and to have lived a thoroughly idle life, without aim or ambition, until, in 1664, it occurred to him, in his thirtieth year, to write a play.

At any critical moment in the development of a literature, events follow one another with such headlong speed, that I must be forgiven if I am a little tiresome about the sequence of dates. According to all the bibliographers, old and new, Etheredge's first play was *She Would if She Could*, 1668, immediately followed by *The Comical Revenge*, first printed in 1669. If this were the case, the claim of Etheredge to critical attention would be comparatively small. Oldys, however, mentions that he had heard of, but never seen, an edition of this latter play of 1664. Neither Langbaine, Gildon, or any of their successors believe in the existence of such a quarto, nor is a copy to be found in the British

Museum. However, I have been so fortunate as to pick up two copies of this mythical quarto of 1664, the main issue of which I suppose to have been destroyed by some one of the many accidents that befell London in that decade, and Etheredge's precedence of all his more eminent comic contemporaries is thus secured. The importance of this date, 1664, is rendered still more evident when we consider that it constitutes a claim for its author for originality in two distinct kinds. *The Comical Revenge, or Love in a Tub*, which was acted at the Duke of York's Theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, in the summer of 1664, is a tragic-comedy, of which the serious portions are entirely written in rhymed heroics, and the comic portions in prose. The whole question of the use of rhyme in English drama has been persistently misunderstood, and its history misstated. In Mr. George Saintsbury's new life of Dryden, for the first time, the subject receives due critical attention, and is approached with the necessary equipment. But while I thoroughly agree with Mr. Saintsbury's view of the practice, I think something may be added from the purely historical side. The fashion of rhyme in the drama, then, to be exact, flourished from 1664 until Lee and Dryden returned to blank verse in 1678. Upon this it suddenly languished, and after being occasionally used until the end of the century, found its last example in Sedley's *Beauty the Conqueror*, published in 1702. The customary opinion that both rhymed dramatic verse and the lighter form of comedy were introduced simultaneously with the Restoration is one of those generalisations which are easily made and slavishly repeated, but which fall before the slightest historical investigation. When the drama was reorganised in 1660, it reappeared in the old debased forms, without the least attempt at novelty. Brome and Shirley had continued to print their plays during the Commonwealth, and in Jasper Mayne had found a disciple who united, without developing, their merits or demerits. During the first years of the Restoration the principal playwrights were Porter, a sort of third-rate Brome, Killegrew, an imitator of Shirley, Stapylton, an apparently lunatic person, and Sir William Lower, to whom is due the praise of having studied French contemporary literature with great zeal, and of having translated Corneille and Quinault. Wherever these poetasters ventured into verse, they displayed such an incompetence as has never before or since disgraced any coterie of considerable writers. Their blank verse was simply inorganic, their serious dialogue a sort of insanity, their comedy a string of pothouse buffoneries and preposterous "humours." Dryden, in his *Wild Gallant*, and a very clever dramatist, Wilson, who never fulfilled his extraordinary promise, tried in 1663 to revive the moribund body of comedy, but always in the style of Ben Jonson; and finally, in 1664, came the introduction of rhymed dramatic verse. For my own part, I frankly confess that I think it was the only course that it was possible to take. The blank iambics of the romantic dramatists had become so execrably weak and distended, the whole movement of dramatic verse had grown so

flaccid, that a little restraint in the severe limits of rhyme was absolutely necessary. It has been too rashly taken for granted that we owe the introduction of the new form to Dryden. It is true that in the 1664 preface to *The Rival Ladies*, a play produced on the boards in the winter of 1663, Dryden recommends the use of rhyme in heroic plays, and this fact, combined with the little study given to Dryden's dramas, has led the critics to take for granted that that play is written in rhyme. A glance at the text will show that this is a mistake. *The Rival Ladies* is written in blank verse, and only two short passages of dialogue in the third act exhibit the timid way in which Dryden tested the ear of the public. Of course lyrical passages in all plays, and the main part of masques, such as the pastorals of Day, had, even in the Elizabethan age, been written in decasyllabic rhymed verse; but these exceptions are as little to the point as is the example which Dryden shelters himself under, *The Siege of Rhodes*. This piece was an opera, and therefore naturally in rhyme. As a point of fact Dryden was the first to propose, and Etheredge the first to carry out, the experiment of writing ordinary plays in rhyme. Encouraged by the preface to *The Rival Ladies*, and urged on by the alexandrines he was accustomed to listen to on the French stage, Etheredge put the whole serious part of his *Comical Revenge* into dialogue of which this piece from the duel scene is an example:—

- Bruce. Brave men! this action makes it well appear
 'Tis honour and not envy brings you here.
- Beaufort. We come to conquer, Bruce, and not to see
 Such villains rob us of our victory;
 Your lives our fatal swords claim as their due,
 We'd wronged ourselves had we not righted you.
- Bruce. Your generous courage has obliged us so,
 That to your succour we our safety owe.
- Lovis. You've done what men of honour ought to do,
 What in your cause we would have done for you.
- Beaufort. You speak the truth, we've but our duty done;
 Prepare; duty's no obligation. [He strips.]
 None come into the field to weigh what's right,
 This is no place for counsel, but for fight.

And so on. The new style was at once taken up by the Howards, Killgrews, and Orrerys, and became, as we have seen, the rage for at least fourteen years.

But the serious portion of *The Comical Revenge* is not worth considering in comparison with the value of the prose part. In the under-plot, the gay, realistic scenes which give the play its sub-title of the "Tale of a Tub," Etheredge virtually founded English comedy, as it was successively understood by Congreve, Goldsmith, and Sheridan. The Royalists had come back from France deeply convinced of the superiority of Paris in all matters belonging to the business of the stage. Immediately upon the Restoration, in 1661, an unknown hand had printed an

English version of the *Menteur* of Corneille. Lower had translated the tragedies of that poet ten years before, and had returned from his exile in Holland with the dramas of Quinault in his hand. But the great rush of Royalists back to England had happened just too soon to give them an opportunity of witnessing the advent of Molière. By the end of 1659 the exiled Court, hovering on the Dutch frontier, had transferred their attention from Paris to London. A few months before this, Molière and his troop had entered Paris, and an unobtrusive performance of *L'Étourdi* had gradually led to other triumphs and to the creation of the greatest modern school of comedy. What gave *The Comical Revenge* of Etheredge its peculiar value and novelty was that it had been written by a man who had seen and understood *L'Étourdi*, *Le Dépit Amoureux*, and *Les Précieuses Ridicules*. Etheredge loitered long enough in Paris for Molière to be revealed to him, and then he hastened back to England with a totally new idea of what comedy ought to be.

The real hero of the first three comedies of Molière is Mascarille, and in like manner the farcical interest of *The Comical Revenge* centres around a valet, Dufoy. When the curtain went up on the first scene, the audience felt that a new thing was being presented to them, new types and an unfamiliar method. Hitherto Ben Jonson had been the one example and theoretical master of all popular comedy. The great aim had been to hold some extravagance of character up to ridicule, to torture one monstrous ineptitude a thousand ways, to exhaust the capabilities of the language in fantastic quips and humours. The comedian had been bound to be in some sort a moralist, to lash himself into an ethical rage about something, and to work by a process of evolution rather than by passionless observation of external manners. Under such a system wit might flourish, but there was no room for humour, in the modern acceptance of the word, for humour takes things quietly, watches unobtrusively, and is at heart sublimely indifferent. Now, the Royalists had come home from exile weary of all moral discussion, apt to let life slip, longing above all things for rest and pleasure and a quiet hour. It was a happy instinct that led Etheredge to improve a little on Molière himself, and simply hold up the mirror of his play to the genial, sensual life of the young gentlemen his contemporaries. The new-found motto of French comedy, *castigat ridendo mores*, would have lain too heavy on English shoulders, the time of castigation was over, and life flowed merrily down to the deluge of the Revolution. The master of Dufoy, Sir Frederick Frolick, is not a type, but a portrait; and each lazy, periwigged fop in the pit clapped hands to welcome a friend that seemed to have just strolled from the Mulberry Garden. He is a man of quality, who can fight at need with great spirit and firmness of nerve, but whose customary occupation is the pursuit of pleasure without dignity and without reflection. Like all Etheredge's fine gentlemen, he is a finished fop, although he has the affectation of not caring for the society of fine ladies. He spends hours at his toilet, and "there never was a girl more humoursome

nor tedious in the dressing of her baby." It seems to me certain that Etheredge intended Sir Frederick as a portrait of himself. Dufoy gives an amusing account of his being taken into Sir Frederick's service. He was lounging on the new bridge in Paris, watching the marionettes and eating custard, when young M. de Grandville drove by in his chariot, in company with his friend, Sir Fred. Frolick, and recommended Dufoy as a likely fellow to be entrusted with some delicate business, which he carried out so well, that Sir Frederick made him his valet. *The Comical Revenge* is a series of brisk and entertaining scenes strung on a very light thread of plot. Sir Frederick plays fast and loose, all through, with a rich widow who wants to marry him; a person called Wheedle, with an accomplice, Palmer, who dresses up to personate a Buckinghamshire drover, plays off the confidence-trick on a stupid knight, Sir Nicholas Cully, quite in the approved manner of to-day. This pastime, called "coney-catching" a century earlier, was by this time revived under the title of "bubbling." By a pleasant amenity of the printer's the rogues say to one another, "Expect your Kew," meaning "cue." Meanwhile high love affairs, jealousies, and a tremendous duel, interrupted by the treachery of Puritan villains, have occupied the heroic scenes. The comedy grows fast and furious; Sir Nicholas rides to visit the widow on a tavern-boy's back, with three bottles of wine suspended on a cord behind him. Sir Frederick frightens the widow by pretending to be dead, and Dufoy, for being troublesome and spiteful, is confined by his fellow-servants in a tub, with his head and hands stuck out of holes, and stumbles up and down the stage in that disguise. A brief extract will give a notion of the sprightly and picturesque manner of the dialogue. A lady has sent her maid to Sir Frederick's lodgings to capitulate with him on his boisterousness.

Beaufort. Jenny in tears! what's the occasion, poor girl?

Maid. I'll tell you, my Lord.

Sir Fred. Buzz! Set not her tongue a-going again; she has made more noise than half a dozen paper-mills; London Bridge at low water is silence to her; in a word, rambling last night, we knocked at her mistress's lodging, they denied us entrance, whereat a harsh word or two flew out.

Maid. These were not all your heroic actions; pray tell the consequences, how you marched bravely at the rear of an army of link-boys; upon the sudden, how you gave defiance, and then, having waged a bloody war with the constable, and having vanquished that dreadful enemy, how you committed a general massacre on the glass windows. Are not these most honourable achievements, such as will be registered to your eternal fame by the most learned historian of Hicks's Hall?

Sir Fred. Good, sweet Jenny, let's come to a treaty; do but hear what articles I propose.

The success of *The Comical Revenge* was unprecedented, and it secured its author an instant popularity. While it was under rehearsal, it attracted the attention of the young Lord Buckhurst, then distinguished only as a Parliamentary man of promise, but soon to become famous as the poet Earl of Dorset. To him Etheredge dedicated his

play, and by him was introduced to that circle of wits, Buckingham, Sedley, and the precocious Rochester, with whom he was to be associated for the rest of his life.

Four years later he produced another and a better play. Meanwhile English comedy had made great advances. Dryden and Wilson had proceeded ; Sedley, Shadwell, the Howards, had made their first appearance; but none of these, not even the author of *The Mulberry Garden*, had quite understood the nature of Etheredge's innovation. In *She Would if She Could* he showed them more plainly what he meant, for he had himself come under the influence of a masterpiece of comedy. It is certain to me that the movement of *She Would if She Could* is founded upon a reminiscence of *Tartuffe*, which, however, was not printed until 1669, "une comédie dont on a fait beaucoup de bruit, qui a esté longtemps persécutée." Etheredge may have been present at the original performance of the first three acts, at Versailles, in May 1664 ; but it seems to me more probable that he saw the public representation at Paris in the summer of 1667, and that he hastened back to England with the plot of his own piece taking form in his brain. The only similarity between the French and English plays is this, that Lady Cockwood is a female *Tartuffe*, a woman of loud religious pretensions, who demands respect and devotion for her piety, and who is really engaged, all the time, in the vain prosecution of a disgraceful intrigue. Sir Oliver Cockwood, a boisterous, elderly knight, has come up to town for the season, in company with his pious lady, who leads him a sad life, with an old friend, Sir Jocelyn Jolly, and with the wards of the latter, two spirited girls called Ariana and Gatty. These people have taken lodgings in St. James's Street, at the "Black Posts," as Mrs. Sentry, the maid, takes pains to inform young Mr. Courtall, a gentleman of fashion in whom Lady Cockwood takes an interest less ingenuous than she pretends. The scene, therefore, instead of being laid in Arcadia or Cockayne, sets us down in the heart of the West End, the fashionable quarter of the London of 1668. The reader who has not studied old maps, or the agreeable books of Mr. Wheatley, is likely to be extremely ill-informed as to the limits and scope of the town two hundred years ago. St. James's Street, which contained all the most genteel houses, ran, a sort of rural road, from Portugal Street, or Piccadilly, down to St. James's Park. One of Charles II.'s first acts was to beautify this district. St. James's Park, which then included Green Park, had been a sort of open meadow. The King cut a canal through it, planted it with lime-trees, and turned the path that led through St. James's Fields into a drive called Pall Mall. In St. James's Street rank and fashion clustered, and young poets contended for the honour of an invitation to Mr. Waller's house on the west side. Here also the country gentry lodged when they came up to town, and a few smart shops had recently been opened to supply the needs of people of quality. Such was the bright scene of that comedy of fashionable life of which *She Would if She Could* gives us a faithful picture. In a town still un-

tainted by smoke and dirt, with fresh country airs blowing over it from all quarters but the east, the gay world of Charles II.'s court ran through its bright ephemeral existence. There is no drama in which the physical surroundings of this life are so picturesquely brought before us as that of Etheredge. The play at present under discussion distinguishes itself from the comic work of Dryden, or Wycherley, or Shadwell, even from that of Congreve, by the little graphic touches, the intimate impression, the clear, bright colour of the scenes. The two girls, Sir Jocelyn's wards, finding life dreary with Lady Cockwood and her pieties, put on vizards, and range the Parks and the Mall without a *chaperon*. This is an artful contrivance, often afterwards imitated—as notably by Lord Lansdowne in his *She Gallants*—but original to Etheredge, and very happy, from the opportunity it gives of drawing out *naïve* remarks on familiar things; for in the second act the girls find their way to the Mulberry Garden, a public place of entertainment, adjoining Lord Arlington's mansion of Goring House, afterwards Buckingham Palace, and much frequented by a public whom Cromwell's sense of propriety had deprived of their favourite Spring Garden. Here Ariana and Gatty meet Lady Cockwood's recalcitrant spark Courtall, walking with his friend Freeman, and from behind their masks carry on with them a hazardous flirtation. The end of this scene, when the two sprightly girls break from their gallants and appear and reappear, crossing the stage from opposite corners, amid scenery that reminded every one in the theatre of the haunt most loved by Londoners, must have been particularly delightful and diverting to witness; and all these are circumstances which we must bear in mind if we wish the drama of the Restoration to be a living thing to us in reading it. It was a mundane entertainment, but in its earthly sincerity it superseded something that had ceased to be either human or divine.

The two old knights are "harp and violin—nature has tuned them to play the fool in concert," and their extravagances hurry the plot to its crisis. They swagger to their own confusion, and Lady Cockwood encourages their folly, that she herself may have an opportunity of meeting Courtall. She contrives to give him an appointment in the New Exchange, which seems to have been a sort of arcade leading out of the Strand, with shops on each side. When the curtain rises for the third act, Mrs. Trinkett is sitting in the door of her shop inviting the people of quality to step in: "What d'ye buy? What d'ye lack, gentlemen? Gloves, ribbands, and essences? ribbands, gloves, and essences?" She is a woman of tact, who, under the pretence of selling "a few fashionable toys to keep the ladies in countenance at a play or in the park," passes letters or makes up rendezvous between people of quality. At her shop the gallants "scent their eyebrows and periwigs with a little essence of oranges or jessamine"; and so Courtall occupies himself till Lady Cockwood arrives. Fortunately for him, Ariana and Gatty, who are out shopping, arrive at the same moment; so he proposes to take

them all in his coach to the "Bear" in Drury Lane for a dance. The party at the "Bear" is like a scene from some artistically mounted drama of our own day. Etheredge, with his singular eye for colour, crowds the stage with damsels in sky-blue, and pink, and flame-coloured taffetas. To them arrive Sir Oliver and Sir Jocelyn; but as Sir Oliver was drunk overnight, Lady Cockwood has locked up all his clothes, except his russet suit of humiliation, in which he is an object of ridicule and persecution to all the bright crowd who—

Wave the gay wreaths, and titter as they prance.

In this scene Etheredge introduces a sword, a velvet coat, a flageolet, a pair of bands, with touches that remind one of Metzu or Gheraerdts Douw. Sir Oliver, who is the direct prototype of Vanbrugh's Sir John Brute, gets very drunk, dances with his own wife in her vizard, and finally brings confusion upon the whole company. The ladies rush home, whither Freeman comes to console Lady Cockwood; a noise is heard, and he is promptly concealed in a cupboard. Courtall enters, and then a fresh hubbub is heard, for Sir Oliver has returned. Courtall is hurried under a table just in time for the old knight to come in and perceive nothing. But he has brought a beautiful china orange home to appease his wife, and as he shows this to her it drops from his fingers, and runs under the table where Courtall lies. The maid, a girl of resource, promptly runs away with the candle, and, in the stage darkness, Courtall is hurried into the cupboard, where he finds Freeman. The threads are gradually unravelled: Courtall and Freeman are rewarded, for nothing in particular, by the hands of Ariana and Gatty, and Lady Cockwood promises to go back to the country and behave properly ever after. The plot of so slight a thing is a gossamer fabric, and scarcely bears analysis; but the comedy was by far the most sprightly performance at that time presented to any audience in Europe save that which was listening to Molière.

Etheredge had not dedicated *She Would if She Could* to any patron; but the grateful town accepted it with enthusiasm, and its author was the most popular of the hour. It was confidently hoped that he would give his energies to the stage; but an indolence that was habitual to him, and against which he never struggled, kept him silent for eight years. During this time, however, he preserved his connection with the theatres, encouraged Medbourne the actor to translate *Tartuffe*, and wrote an epilogue for him when that play was first produced in England in 1670. He wrote, besides, a great number of little amatory pieces, chiefly in octosyllabics, which have never been collected. Oldys says, in one of his MS. notes, that he once saw a *Miscellany*, printed in 1672, almost full of verses by Etheredge, but without his name. I have not been able to trace this; but most of the numerous collections of contemporary verse contained something of his, down to the *Miscellany* of 1701. If anyone took the trouble to extract these, at least fifty or sixty poems

could be put together ; but they are none of them very good. Etheredge had but little of the lyrical gift of such contemporaries as Dryden, Rochester, and Sedley ; his rhymed verse is apt to be awkward and languid. This may be as good an opportunity as any other of quoting the best song of his that I have been able to unearth :—

Ye happy swains, whose hearts are free
From love's imperial chain,
Take warning and be taught by me
To avoid th' enchanting pain ;
Fatal the wolves to trembling flocks,
Fierce winds to blossoms prove,
To careless seamen, hidden rocks,
To human quiet—love.

Fly the fair sex, if bliss you prize—
The snake's beneath the flower ;
Who ever gazed on beauteous eyes
And tasted quiet more ?
How faithless is the lovers' joy !
How constant is their care !
The kind with falsehood do destroy,
The cruel with despair.

We learn from Shadwell, in the preface to *The Humorists* of 1671, that the success of *She Would if She Could* was endangered by the slovenly playing of the actors. This may have helped to disgust the fastidious Etheredge. At all events, the satirists began to be busy with the name of so inert a popular playwright ; and, in 1675, Rochester expressed a general opinion in the doggerel of his *Session of the Poets* :—

Now Apollo had got gentle George in his eye,
And frankly confessed that, of all men that writ,
There's none had more fancy, sense, judgment, and wit ;
But i' the crying sin, idleness, he was so hardened
That his long seven years' silence was not to be pardoned.

"Gentle George" gave way, and composed, with all the sparkle, wit, and finish of which he was capable, his last and best-known piece, *The Man of Mode, or Sir Fopling Flutter*, brought out at the Duke's Theatre in the summer of 1676. Recollecting his threatened fiasco in 1668, Etheredge determined to put himself under powerful patronage, and dedicated his new play to Mary of Modena, the young Duchess of York, who remained his faithful patroness until fortune bereft her of the power to give. Sir Car Scroope wrote the prologue, Dryden the epilogue, and the play was acted by the best company of the time—Betterton, Harris, Medbourn, and the wife of Shadwell, while the part of Belinda was in all probability taken by the matchless Mrs. Barry, the new glory of the stage.

The great merit of *The Man of Mode* rests in the brilliance of the writing and the force of the characterisation. There is no plot. People

of the old school, like Captain Alexander Radcliffe, who liked plot above all other things in a comedy, decried the manner of Etheredge, and preferred to it "the manly art of brawny Wycherley," the new writer, whose *Country Wife* had just enjoyed so much success; but, on the whole, the public was dazzled and delighted with the new types and the brisk dialogue, and united to give Sir Fopling Flutter a warmer welcome than greeted any other stage-hero during Charles II.'s reign. There was a delightful heroine, with abundance of light brown hair, and lips like the petals of "a Provence rose, fresh on the bush, ere the morning sun has quite drawn up the dew;" there was a shoemaker whom everyone knew, and an orange-woman whom everybody might have known—characters which Dickens would have laughed at and commended; there was Young Bellair, in which Etheredge drew his own portrait; there was the sparkling Dorimant, so dressed that all the pit should know that my Lord Rochester was intended; there was Medley, Young Bellair's bosom friend, in whom the gossips discovered the portrait of Sir Charles Sedley; above all, there was Sir Fopling Flutter, the monarch of all beaux and dandies, the froth of Parisian affectation—a delightful personage, almost as alive to us to-day as to the enchanted audience of 1676. During two acts the great creature was spoken of, but never seen. Just arrived from France, all the world had heard about him, and was longing to see him, "with a pair of gloves up to his elbows, and his periwig more exactly curled than a lady's head newly dressed for a ball." At last, in the third act, when curiosity has been raised to a fever, the fop appears. He is introduced to a group of ladies and gentlemen of quality, and when the first civilities are over he begins at once to criticise their dress:—

Lady Townley. Wit, I perceive, has more power over you than beauty, Sir Fopling, else you would not have let this lady stand so long neglected.

Sir Fopling (to Emilia). A thousand pardons, Madam! Some civilities due of course upon the meeting a long absent friend. The *éclat* of so much beauty, I confess, ought to have charmed me sooner.

Emilia. The brilliant of so much good language, sir, has much more power than the little beauty I can boast.

Sir Fopling. I never saw anything prettier than this high work on your *point d'Espagne*.

Emilia. 'Tis not so rich as *point de Venise*.

Sir Fop. Not altogether, but looks cooler, and is more proper for the season. Dorimant, is not that Medley?

Dori. The same, sir.

Sir Fop. Forgive me, sir, in this *embarras* of civilities, I could not come to have you in my arms sooner. You understand an equipage the best of any man in town, I hear!

Medley. By my own you would not guess it.

Sir Fop. There are critics who do not write, sir. Have you taken notice of the *calèche* I brought over?

Medley. O yes! it has quite another air than the English make.

Sir Fop. 'Tis as easily known from an English tumbrel as an *inns-of-court* man is from one of us.

Dori. Truly there is a *bel-air* in *calè-hes* as well as men.

Medley. But there are few so delicate as to observe it.

Sir Fop. The world is generally very *grossier* here indeed.

Lady Townley. He's very fine (*looking at Sir Fop*).

Emilia. Extreme proper.

Sir Fop. O, a slight suit I had made to appear in at my first arrival—not worthy your admiration, ladies.

Dori. The pantaloons are very well mounted.

Sir Fop. The tassels are new and pretty.

Medley. I never saw a coat better cut.

Sir Fop. It makes me look long-waisted, and, I think, slender.

Lady Townley. His gloves are well-fingered, large, and graceful.

Sir Fop. I was always eminent for being *bien-ganté*.

Emilia. He must wear nothing but what are originals of the most famous hands in Paris!

Sir Fop. You are in the right, Madam.

Lady Townley. The suit?

Sir Fop. Barroy.

Emilia. The garniture?

Sir Fop. Le Gras.

Medley. The shoes?

Sir Fop. Piccat.

Dori. The periwig?

Sir Fop. Chedreux.

Lady Townley and Emilia (together). The gloves?

Sir Fop. Orangerie (*holding up his hands to them*). You know the smell, ladies?

The hand that throws in these light touches, in a key of rose-colour on pale gray, no longer reminds us of Molière, but exceedingly of Congreve. A recent critic has very justly remarked that in mere wit, the continuity of brilliant dialogue in which the action does not seek to advance, Molière is scarcely the equal of Congreve at his best, and the brightest scenes of *The Man of Mode* show the original direction taken by Etheredge in that line which was more specially to mark the triumph of English comedy. But the author of *Love for Love* was still in the nursery when *The Man of Mode* appeared, as it were, to teach him how to write. Until Congreve reached manhood, Etheredge's example seemed to have been lost, and the lesson he attempted to instil to have fallen on admiring hearers that were incapable of repeating it. The shallowness, vivacity, and vanity of Sir Fopling are admirably maintained. In the scene of which part has just been quoted, after showing his intimate knowledge of all the best tradesmen in Paris, some one drops the name of Bussy, to see if he is equally at home among literary notabilities. But he supposes that Bussy d'Ambois is meant, and is convicted of having never heard of Bussy Rabutin. This is a curiously early notice of a famous writer who survived it nearly twenty years; it does not seem that any French critic has observed this. Sir Fopling Flutter is so eminently the best of Etheredge's creations that we are tempted to give one more sample of his quality. He has come with two or three other sparks to visit Dorimant at his rooms, and he dances a *pas seul*.

Young Bellair. See! Sir Fopling is dancing!

Sir Fop. Prithee, Dorimant, why hast thou not a glass hung up here? A room is the dullest thing without one.

Y. Bell. Here is company to entertain you.

Sir Fop. But I mean in case of being alone. In a glass a man may entertain himself;—

Dori. The shadow of himself indeed.

Sir Fop. Correct the errors of his motion and his dress.

Medley. I find, Sir Fopling, in your solitude you remember the saying of the wise man, and study yourself!

Sir Fop. 'Tis the best diversion in our retirements. Dorimant, thou art a pretty fellow, and wearest thy clothes well, but I never saw thee have a handsome cravat. Were they made up like mine, they'd give another air to thy face. Prithee let me send my man to dress thee one day. By heavens, an Englishman cannot tie a ribband.

Dori. They are something clumsy-fisted.

Sir Fop. I have brought over the prettiest fellow that ever spread a toilet, he served some time under Merille, the greatest *g nie* in the world for a *valet de chambre*.

Dori. What, he who formerly belonged to the Duke of Candolle?

Sir Fop. The very same—and got him his immortal reputation.

Dori. You've a very fine brandenburgh on, Sir Fopling!

Sir Fop. It serves to wrap me up after the fatigue of a ball.

Medley. I see you often in it, with your periwig tied up.

Sir Fop. We should not always be in a set dress; 'tis more *en cavalier* to appear now and then in a *deshabille*.

In these wholly fantastical studies of manners we feel less than in the more serious portions of the comedy the total absence of moral purpose, high aim, or even honourable instinct which was the canker of the age. A negligence that pervaded every section of the upper classes, which robbed statesmen of their patriotism and the clergy of their earnestness, was only too exactly mirrored in the sprightly follies of the stage. Yet even there we are annoyed by a heroine who is discovered eating a nectarine, and who, rallied on buying a "filthy nosegay," indignantly rebuts the accusation, and declares that nothing would induce her to smell such vulgar flowers as stocks and carnations, or anything that blossoms, except orange-flowers and tuberoses. It is a frivolous world, Strephon bending on one knee to Cloe, who fans the pink blush on her painted cheek, while Momus peeps, with a grin, through the curtains behind her. They form an engaging trio, *mais ce n'est pas la vie humaine*.

The Man of Mode was licensed on June 3, 1676; it enjoyed an unparalleled success, and before the month was out its author was flying for his life. We learn this from the Hatton Correspondence, first printed in 1879. It seems that in the middle of June, Etheredge, Rochester, and two friends, Captain Bridges and Mr. Downes, went down to Epsom on a Sunday night. They were tossing some fiddlers in a blanket for refusing to play, when a barber, who came to see what the noise was, as a practical joke, induced them to knock up the constable. They did so with a vengeance, for they smashed open his door, entered his house, and broke his head, giving

him a severe beating. At last they were overpowered by the watch, and Etheredge having made a submissive oration, the row seemed to be at an end, when suddenly Lord Rochester, like a coward as he was, drew his sword on the constable, who had dismissed his men. The constable shrieked out "Murder!" and the watch returning, one of them broke the skull of Downes with his staff. The others ran away, and the watchmen were left to run poor Downes through with a pike. He lingered until the 29th, when Charles Hatton records that he is dead, and that Etheredge and Rochester have absconded. Four years afterwards the Hatton Correspondence gives us another glimpse of our poet, again in trouble. On January 14, 1680, the roof of the tennis-court in the Haymarket fell down. "Sir George Etheridge and several others were very dangerously hurt. Sir Charles Sidley had his skull broke, and it is thought it will be mortal." Sidley, or Sedley, flourished for twenty years more; but we may note that here, for the first time, our dramatist is "Sir George." It is evident that he had been knighted since 1676, when he was plain "George Etheredge, Esq." In an MS. poem called *The Present State of Matrimony*, he is accused of having married a rich widow to facilitate his being knighted, and with success. The entries in *The Letterbook* give me reason to believe that he was not maligned in this. But he seems to have lived on very bad terms with his wife, and to have disgraced himself by the open protection of Mrs. Barry, after Rochester's death in 1680. By this famous actress, whose name can no more be omitted from the history of literature than that of Mrs. Gwynn from the history of statecraft, he had a daughter, on whom he settled five or six thousand pounds, but who died young.

The close of Etheredge's career was spent in the diplomatic service. When this commenced is more than I have been able to discover. From *The Letterbook* it appears that he was for some time envoy of Charles II. at the Hague. It would even seem that he was sent to Constantinople, for a contemporary satirist speaks of

Ovid to Pontus sent for too much wit,
Etheredge to Turkey for the want of it.

Certain expressions in *The Letterbook* make me suspect that he had been in Sweden. But it is not until the accession of James II. that his figure comes out into real distinctness. In this connection I think it would be hard to exaggerate the value of *The Letterbook*, which I am about to introduce to my readers. After reading it from end to end I feel that I know Sir George Etheredge, hitherto the most phantasmal of the English poets, better than I can know any literary man of his time, better than Dryden, better, perhaps, than Milton.

In February 1685 James II. ascended the throne, and by March, Mary of Modena had worked so assiduously for her favourite that this warrant, for the discovery of which I owe my best thanks to Mr. Noel Sainsbury, was entered in the Privy Signet Book :—

Warrant to pay Sir Geo. Etheredge (whom his Maj. has thought fit to employ in his service in Germany), 3*l.* per diem.

On March 5 *The Letterbook* was bought, and Etheredge and his secretary started for the Continent. Why they loitered at the Hague and in Amsterdam does not appear, but their journey was made in so leisurely a manner that they did not arrive in Ratisbon until August 30. It does appear, however, that the dissipated little knight behaved very ill in Holland, and spent one summer's night dead drunk in the streets of the Hague. On his arrival at Ratisbon, he had two letters of recommendation, one from Barillon to the French ambassador, the other from the Spanish ambassador to the Burgundian minister. The first of these he used at once, and cultivated the society at the French Embassy in a way that would have been extremely impolitic if it had not, without doubt, been entered upon in accordance with instructions from home. It was doubtless known to Etheredge, although a secret at the German court, that James had commenced his reign by opening private negotiations with France. The poet settled in a very nice house, with a garden running down to the Danube, set up a carriage and good horses, valets, and "a cook, though I cannot hope to be well-served by the latter" in this barbarous Germany. On December 24 he wrote two letters, parts of which may be quoted here. To Lord Sunderland he writes:—

Since my coming here I have had a little fever, which has been the reason I have not paid my duty so regular as I ought to do to your Lordship. I am now pretty well recovered, and hope I am quit at a reasonable price for what I was to pay on the change of climate, and a greater change in my manner of living. Is it not enough to breed an ill habit of body in a man who was used to sit up till morning to be forced, for want of knowing what to do with himself, to go to bed in the evening; one who has been used to live with all freedom, never to approach anyone without ceremony; one who has been used to run up and down to find variety of company, to sit at home and entertain himself in solitude? One would think the Diet had made a *Reichsgut-achten* to banish all pastimes in the city. Here was the Countess of Nostitz, but malice would not let her live in quiet, and she is lately removed to Prague. Good company met at her house, and she had a little *hombre* to entertain them. A more com-mode lady, by what I hear, never kept a basset [table] in London. If I do well after all this, you must allow me to be a great philosopher; and I dare affirm Cato left not the world with more firmness of soul than I did England.

And to a friend in Paris, on the same date:—

Le divertissement le plus galant du pays cet hiver c'est le traîneau, où l'on se met en croupe de quelque belle Allemande, de manière que vous ne pouvez ni la voir, ni lui parler, à cause d'un diable de tintamarre des sonnettes dont les harnais sont tous garnis.

In short, he very soon learned the limitations of the place. His letters are filled with complaints of the boorish manners of the people, the dreary etiquette which encumbers the Court and the Diet, and the solitude he feels in being separated from all his literary friends. The malice of the secretary informs us that Sir George soon gave up his pre-

cise manner of living, and adopted a lazier style. He seldom rose until two or three P.M., dined at five or six, and then went to the French ambassador's for three or four hours. Finding time hang heavy on his hands, he took to gaming with any disreputable Frenchman that happened to pass through the town. Already, early in 1686, a scoundrel called Purpurat, from Vienna, has got round him by flatteries and presents of tobacco, and has robbed him of 10,000 crowns at cards. When, however, things have come to this pass, Etheredge wakes up, and on the suggestion of M. Purpurat, that he will be going back to Vienna, detains him until he has won nearly all his money back again, and finally escapes with the loss of a pair of pistols, with his crest upon them, which Purpurat shows in proof of his ascendancy over the English ambassador.

These matters occupy the spring and summer of 1686, but there is nothing said about them in the letters home. These letters, however, are cheerful enough. In January he encloses, with his dispatches to the Earl of Middleton, a long squib in octosyllabic verse, which the English minister, who is ill at these numbers, gets Dryden to answer in kind. A cancelled couplet in the first draft of the former remarks :—

Let them who live in plenty flout ;
I must make shift with sour kraut.

In June 1686 he writes to Middleton that he has "not this week received any letter from England, which is a thing that touches me here as nearly as ever a disappointment did in London with the woman I loved most tenderly." Middleton comforts him by telling him that the king, after a performance of *The Man of Mode*, remarked to him that he expected Etheredge to put on the sock, and write a new comedy while he was at Ratisbon. Once or twice, in subsequent letters, the poet refers to this idea ; but the weight of affairs, combined with his native indolence, prevented his attempting the task. Meanwhile, he does not seem to have neglected his duty, as it was understood in those days. He writes, so he says at least, twice every week about state matters to Middleton, and, notwithstanding all the spiteful messages sent home about him, he does not seem to have ever lost the confidence of James and his ministers. These latter were most of them his private friends, and in his most official communications he suddenly diverges into some waggish allusion to old times. His attitude at Ratisbon was not what we should now demand from an envoy. The English people, the English Parliament, do not exist for him ; his one standard of duty is the personal wish of the king. By indulging the bias of James, which indeed was his own bias, an excessive partiality for all things French, he won himself, as we shall see, the extreme ill-will of the Germans. But the only really serious scrape into which he got, an affair which annoyed him throughout the autumn and winter of 1686, does not particularly redound to his discredit. It is a curious story, and characteristic of the times ; *The Letterbook*, by giving Etheredge's own account, and also the secretary's

spiteful rendering, enables us to follow the circumstances pretty closely. A troop of actors from Nuremburg came over to Ratisbon in the summer of 1686, with a star who seems to have been the leading actress of her time in South Germany. This lady, about whom the only biographical fact that we discover is that her Christian name was Julia, seems to have been respectability itself. Even the enemies of Etheredge did not suggest that any immoral connection existed between them, and on the last day of the year, after having suffered all sorts of annoyance on her behalf, he still complains that she is as *fière* as she is fair. But actors were then still looked upon in Germany, as to some extent even in France, as social pariahs, vagabonds whom it was disgraceful to know, except as servants of a high order; artistic menials, whose vocation it was to amuse the great. But England was already more civilised than this; Etheredge was used to meet Betterton and his stately wife at the court of his monarch, and even the sullied reputation of such lovely sinners as Mrs. Barry did not shut them out of Whitehall. Etheredge, therefore, charmed in his Abdera of letters by the art and wit and beauty of Julia, paid her a state visit in his coach, and prayed for the honour of a visit in return. Ratisbon was beside itself with indignation. Every sort of social insult was heaped upon the English envoy. At a *fête champêtre* the lubberly Germans crowded out their elbows so as to leave him no place at table; the grand ladies cut him in the street when their coaches met his, and it was made a subject of venomous report to England that, in spite of public opinion, he refused to quit the acquaintance of the *comédienne*, as they scornfully named her. At last, on the evening of November 25, a group of students and young people of quality, who had heard that Julia was dining with the English ambassador to meet the French envoy and one or two guests, surrounded Etheredge's house in masks, threw stones at the windows, shouted "Great is Diana of the English envoy!" and, on Etheredge's appearing, roared to him to throw out to them the *comédienne*. The plucky little poet answered by arming his lacqueys and his maids with sword-sticks, pokers, and whatever came to hand, and by suddenly charging the crowd at the head of his little garrison. The Germans were routed for a moment, and Etheredge took advantage of his success to put Julia into his coach, jump in beside her, and conduct her to her lodging. The crowd, however, was too powerful for him; and though she slept that night in safety, next day she was thrown into prison by the magistrates, for causing a disturbance in the streets.

Etheredge, not knowing what to do, wrote this epistle to the ring-leader of the attack on his house, the Baron von Sensheim :—

J'étois surpris d'apprendre que ce joly gentil-homme travesty en Italien hier au soir estoit le Baron de Sensheim. Je ne savois pas que les honnetes gens se méloient avec des lacquais ramassez pour faire les fanfarons, et les batteurs de pavé. Si vous avez quelque chose à me dire, faites le moy savoir comme vous devez, et ne vous amusez plus à venir insulter mes Domestiques ni ma maison, soyez content que vous

l'avez échappé belle et ne retournez plus chercher les récompences de telles folies pour vos beaux compagnons. J'ay des autres mesures à prendre avec eux.

To this he received a vague and impertinent reply in German. Opinion in the town was so strongly moved, that for some time Etheredge never went out without having a musketoon in his coach, and each of his footmen armed with a brace of pistols ready charged. Eventually the lady was released, on the understanding that she and her company should leave the town, which they did, proceeding in the last days of 1686 across the Danube to Bayrischenhoff, where Etheredge visited them. It was in the midst of this turmoil that Etheredge composed some of his best occasional verses. I do not think they have ever been printed before :—

Upon the downs when shall I breathe at ease,
Have nothing else to do but what I please,
In a fresh cooling shade upon the brink
Of Arden's spring, have time to read and think,
And stretch, and sleep, when all my care shall be
For health, and pleasure my philosophy ?
When shall I rest from business, noise, and strife,
Lay down the soldier's and the courtier's life,
And in a little melancholy seat
Begin at last to live and to forget
The nonsense and the farce of what the fools call great.

There is something strangely Augustan about this fragment ; we should expect it to be dated 1716 rather than 1686, and to be signed by some Pomfret or Tickell of the school of Addison.

On New Year's Day, 1687, he encloses in a letter to the Earl of Middleton a French song, inspired by Julia, which may deserve to be printed as a curiosity. I give it in the author's spelling, which shone more in French than English :—

Garde le secret de ton ame,
Et ne te laisse pas flatter,
Qu'Iris espargnera ta flamme,
Si tu luy permets d'éclater ;
Son humeur, à l'amour rebelle,
Exile tous ses doux desirs,
Et la tendresse est criminelle
Qui vent luy parler en soupirs.

Puis que tu vis sous son empire,
Il faut luy cacher ton destin,
Si tu ne veux le rendre pire
Percé du trait de son dédain ;
D'une rigueur si delicate
Ton cœur ne peut rien esperer,
Derobe donc à cette ingrante
La vanité d'en trionfer.

In February a change of ministry in London gives him something else to think about ; he hears a report that he is to be sent to Stockholm ;

he writes eagerly to his patrons for news. On the eleventh of the month he receives a tremendous snub from the treasury about his extravagance, and is told that in future his extra expenses must never exceed fifty pounds every three months. He is, indeed, assailed with many annoyances, for his wife writes on the subject of the *comédienne* from Nuremberg, and roundly calls him a rogue. Upon this Etheredge writes to the poet, Lord Mulgrave, and begs him to make up the quarrel, sending by the same post, on March 13, 1687, this judicious letter to Lady Etheredge :—

My Lady,

I beg your pardon for undertaking to advise you. I am so well satisfied by your last letter of your prudence and judgment that I shall never more commit the same error. I wish there were copies of it in London that it might serve as a pattern to modest wives to write to their husbands; you shall find me so careful hereafter how I offend you that I will no more subscribe myself your loving, since you take it ill, but,

Madam,

Y^r. most dutyfull husband,

G. E.

His letters of 1687 are very full of personal items and scraps of literary gossip. It would be impossible on this, the first introduction of *The Letterbook*, to do justice to all its wealth of allusion. He carefully repeats the harangue of the Siamese ambassadors on leaving the German court; he complains again and again of the neglect of the Count of Windisgrätz, who represents the Prince of Nassau, and is all powerful in the Palatinate; he complains still more bitterly of the open rudeness of the Countess Windisgrätz; he is anxious about the welfare of Nat Lee, at that time shut up in a lunatic asylum, but about to emerge for the production of *The Princess of Cleve*, in 1689, and then to die; he writes a delightful letter to Betterton, on May 26, 1687, asking for news of all kinds about the stage. He says that his chief diversion is music, that he has three musicians living in the house, that they play all the best operas, and that a friend in Paris sends him whatever good music is published. One wonders whether Etheredge knew that Jean Baptiste Lully had died a week or two before this letter was written. News of the success of Sedley's *Bellamira* reaches him in June 1687, and provokes from him this eloquent defence of his old friend's genius :—

I am glad the town has so good a taste as to give the same just applause to St. Charles Sidley's writing which his friends have always done to his conversation. Few of our plays can boast of more wit than I have heard him speak at a supper. Some barren sparks have found fault with what he has formerly done, only because the fairness of the soil has produced so big a crop. I daily drink his health, my Lord Dorset's, your own, and all our friends'.

A few allusions to famous men of letters, all made in 1687, may be placed side by side :—

Mr. Wynne has sent me *The Hind and the Panther*, by which I find John Dryden

has a noble ambition to restore poetry to its ancient dignity in wrapping up the mysteries of religion in verse. What a shame it is to me to see him a saint, and remain still the same devil [myself].

Dryden finds his *Macflecknoe* does no good: I wish him better success with his *Hind and Panther*.

General Dryden is an expert captain, but I always thought him fitter for execution than council.

Remind my Lord Dorset how he and I carried two draggled-tailed nymphs one bitter frosty night over the Thames to Lambeth.

If he happens in a house with Mr. Crown, John's songs will charm the whole family.

A letter from Dryden, full of pleasant chat, informs Etheredge in February that Wycherley is sick of an apoplexy. The envoy begs leave, later in the year, to visit his friend, the Count de Thun, whose acquaintance he made in Amsterdam, and who is now at Munich, but permission is refused. In October the whole Electoral College invites itself to spend the afternoon in Sir George Etheredge's garden, who entertains them so lavishly, and with so little infusion of Danube water in the wine, that next morning he is ill in bed. His indisposition turns to tertian ague, and towards the end of the month he asks to be informed how quinine should be prepared. He compares himself philosophically to Falstaff, however, and by Christmas time grows pensive at the thought of the "plum-pottage" at home, and is solicitous about a black-laced hood and pair of scarlet stockings which he has ordered from London. In January 1688 he laments that Sedley has grown temperate and Dorset uxorious, but vows that he will be on his guard, and remain foppish. The last extract that has any literary interest is taken from a letter dated March 8, 1688:—

Mrs. Barry bears up as well as I myself have done; my poor Lord Rochester [Wilmot, not Hyde] could not weather the Cape, and live under the Line fatal to puling constitutions. Though I have given up writing plays, I should be glad to read a good one, wherefore pray let Will Richards send me Mr Shadwell's [*The Squire of Alsatia*] as soon as it is printed, that I may know what is being done. . . . Nature, you know, intended me for an idle fellow, and gave me passions and qualities fit for that blessed calling, but fortune has made a changeling of me, and necessity now forces me to set up for a fop of business.

Three days after this he writes the last letter preserved in *The Letter-book*, and, but for an appendix to that volume, we might have believed the popular story that Etheredge fell down stairs at Ratisbon and broke his neck. But the treacherous secretary continues to write in 1689, and gives us fresh particulars. He states that his quarrel with Sir George was that he had been promised 60*l.* per annum, and could only get 40*l.* out of his master. He further declares that to the last Etheredge did not know ten words of Dutch (German), and had not merely to make use of a French interpreter, but had to entrust his private business to one or other of his lacqueys; and that moreover he spent a great part of his time "visiting all the alehouses of the town, accompanied by his servants, his *valet de chambre*, his hofmaster, and his dancing and

fighting master, all with their coats turned inside outwards." In his anger he lets us know what became of Etheredge at the Revolution, for in a virulent Latin harangue at the close of *The Letterbook* he states that after a stay at Ratisbon of "tres annos et sex menses," accurately measured, for the secretary's cry is a cry for gold, Etheredge fled to Paris. This flight must therefore have taken place early in March 1689. "Quando hinc abiit ad asylum apud Gallos querendum," the poet left his books behind him, a proof that his taking leave was sudden and urgent. The secretary gives a list of them, and it is interesting to find the only play-books mentioned are Shakespeare's *Works* and the *Œuvres de Molière*, in 2 vols., probably the edition of 1682. I note also the works of Sarrazin and of Voiture.

At this point, I am sorry to say, the figure of Etheredge at present eludes me. There seems no clue whatever to the date of his death, except that in an anonymous pamphlet, written by John Dennis, and printed in 1722, Etheredge is spoken of as having been dead "nearly thirty years." Dennis was over thirty at the Revolution, and is as trustworthy an authority as we could wish for. By this it would seem that Etheredge died about 1693, nearer the age of sixty than fifty. But Colonel Chester has the record of administration to the estate of a Dame Mary Etheredge, widow, dated Feb. 1, 1692. As we know of no other knight of the name, except Sir James Etheridge, who died in 1736, this was probably the poet's relict; and it may yet appear that he died in 1691. He was a short, brisk man, with a quantity of fair hair, and a fine complexion, which he spoiled by drinking. He left no children, but his brother, who long survived him, left a daughter, who is said to have married Aaron Hill.

EDMUND W. GOSSE.

[It is to the kindness of my friend Mr. Edward Scott that I owe the discovery of *The Letterbook*. I have also to acknowledge valuable help from Mr. W. Noel Sainsbury, who has examined the State Papers for me. Colonel Joseph Chester has courteously consented to search his invaluable catalogues of the registers. I have acknowledged in the body of the paper my debt to Oldys' MS. notes and conjectures. To protect myself from the charge of plagiarism, I may add that the anonymous article on Etheredge in the new edition of the *Encyclopædia Britannica*, in which the critical view I have here taken was first propounded in outline, is from my pen. In all cases my dates are new style.

E. W. G.]

Autumn Wanderings.

I.

ITALIAM PETIMUS.

Italiam petimus! We left our upland home before daybreak on a clear October morning. There had been a hard frost, spangling the meadows with rime-crystals where the sun's rays touched them. Men and women were mowing the frozen grass with thin short Alpine scythes; and as the swathes fell, they gave a crisp, an almost tinkling sound. Down into the gorge, surnamed of Avalanche, our horses plunged; and there we lost the sunshine till we reached the Bear's-walk, opening upon the vales of Albula, and Julier, and Schyn. But, up above, shone morning light upon fresh snow and steep slopes reddened with a hundred fading plants; and now and then it caught the grey green icicles that hung from cliffs where summer streams had dripped. There is no colour lovelier than the blue of an autumn sky in the high Alps, defining ridges powdered with light snow, and melting imperceptibly downward into the warm yellow of the larches and the crimson of the bilberry. Wiesen was radiantly beautiful: those aerial ranges of the hills that separate Albula from Julier, soared crystal-clear above their forests; and for a foreground, on the green fields starred with lilac crocuses, careered a group of children on their sledges. Then came the row of giant peaks—Pitz d'Aela, Tinzenhorn, and Michelhorn, above the deep ravine of Albula—all seen across wide undulating golden swards, close-shaven and awaiting winter. Carnations hung from cottage windows in full bloom, casting sharp angular black shadows on white walls.

Italiam petimus! We have climbed the valley of the Julier, following its green, transparent torrent. A night has come and gone at Mühlen. The stream still leads us up, diminishing in volume as we rise, up through the fleecy mists that roll asunder for the sun, disclosing far off snowy ridges and blocks of granite mountains. The lifeless, soundless waste of rock, where only thin winds whistle out of silence and fade suddenly into still air, is passed. Then comes the descent, with its forests of larch and cembra, golden and dark green upon a ground of grey, and in front the serried shafts of the Bernina, and here and there a glimpse of emerald lake at turnings of the road. Autumn is the season for this landscape. Through the fading of innumerable leaflets, the yellowing of larches, and something vaporous in the low sun, it gains a colour not unlike that of the lands we seek. By the side of the lake at Silvaplana, the light was strong and warm, but mellow. Pearly clouds hung over

the Maloja, and floating overhead cast shadows on the opaque water, which is perfectly like chrysoprase. The breadth of golden, brown, and russet tints upon the valley at this moment adds softness to its lines of level strength. The Engadine possesses an austere charm beyond the common beauty of Swiss landscape; but this charm is only perfected in autumn. The fresh snow on the heights that guard it, help. And then there are the forests of dark pines upon those many knolls and undulating mountain-flanks beside the lakes. Sitting and dreaming there in noonday sun, I kept repeating to myself *Italiam petimus!*

A hurricane blew upward from the pass as we left Silvaplana, ruffling the lake with gusts of the Italian wind. By Silz Maria we came in sight of a dozen Italian workmen, arm linked in arm in two rows, tramping in rhythmic stride, and singing as they went. Two of them were such nobly-built young men that for a moment the beauty of the landscape faded from my sight, and I was saddened. They moved to their singing, like some of Mason's or Frederick Walker's figures, with the free grace of living statues, and laughed as we drove by. And yet, with all their beauty, industry, sobriety, intelligence, these Italians of the northern valleys serve the stolid people of the Grisons like negroes, doing their roughest work at scanty wages.

So we came to the vast Alpine wall, and stood on a bare granite slab, and looked over into Italy, as men might lean from the battlements of a fortress. Behind lies the Alpine valley, grim, declining slowly northward, with wind-lashed lakes and glaciers sprawling from storm-broken pyramids of gneiss. Below spread the unfathomable depths that lead to Lombardy, flooded with sunlight, filled with swirling vapour, but never wholly hidden from our sight. For the blast kept shifting the cloud-masses, and the sun streamed through in spears and bands of sheeny rays. Over the parapet our horses dropped, down through sable spruce and amber larch, down between tangles of rowan and autumnal underwood. Ever as we sank, the mountains rose—those sharp embattled precipices, toppling spires, impendent chasms blurred with mist, that make the entrance into Italy sublime. Nowhere do the Alps exhibit their full stature, their commanding puissance, with such majesty as in the gates of Italy; and of all those gates I think there is none to compare with Maloja, none certainly to rival it in abruptness of initiation into the Italian secret. Below Vico Soprano we pass already into the violets and blues of Titian's landscape. Then come the purple boulders among chestnut trees; then the double dolomite-like peak of Pitz Badin and Promontogno.

It is sad that words can do even less than painting could to bring this window-scene at Promontogno before another eye. The casement just frames it. In the foreground are meadow slopes, thinly, capriciously planted with chestnut trees and walnuts, each standing with its shadow cast upon the sward. A little further falls the torrent, foaming down between black jaws of rain-stained granite, with the wooden buildings of

a rustic mill set on a ledge of rock. Suddenly above this landscape soars the valley, clothing its steep sides on either hand with pines; and there are emerald isles of pasture on the wooded flanks; and then cliffs, where the red-stemmed larches glow; and at the summit, shooting into ether with a swathe of mist around their basement, soar the double peaks, the one a pyramid, the other a bold broken crystal not unlike the Finsteraarhorn seen from Furka. These are connected by a snowy saddle, and snow is lying on their inaccessible crags in powdery drifts. Sunlight pours between them into the ravine. The green and golden forests now join from either side, and now recede, according as the sinuous valley brings their lines together or disparts them. There is a sound of cow-bells on the meadows; and the roar of the stream is dulled or quickened as the gusts of this October wind sweep by or slacken. *Italiam petimus!*

Tangimus Italiam! Chiavenna is a worthy key to this great gate Italian. We walked at night in the open galleries of the Cathedral cloister—white, smoothly curving, well-proportioned loggie, enclosing a green space, whence soars the Campanile to the stars. The moon had sunk, but her light still silvered the mountains that stand at watch round Chiavenna; and the castle rock was flat and black against that dreamy background. Jupiter, who walked so lately for us on the long ridge of the Jacobshorn above our pines, had now an ample space of sky over Lombardy to light his lamp in. Why is it, we asked each other, as we smoked our pipes and strolled, why is it that Italian beauty does not leave the spirit so untroubled as an Alpine scene? Why do we here desire the flower of some emergent feeling to grow from the air, or from the soil, or from humanity to greet us? This sense of want evoked by Southern beauty is perhaps the antique mythopoeic yearning. But in our perplexed life it takes another form, and seems the longing for emotion, ever fleeting, ever new, unrealised, unreal, insatiable.

II.

OVER THE APENNINES.

At Parma we slept in the Albergo della Croce Bianca, which is more a bric-a-brac shop than an inn; and slept but badly, for the good folk of Parma twanged guitars and exercised their hoarse male voices all night in the street below. We were glad when Christian called us, at 5 A.M., for an early start across the Apennines. This was the day of a right Roman journey. In thirteen and a half hours, leaving Parma at 6, and arriving in Sarzana at 7.30, we flung ourselves across the spine of Italy, from the plains of Eridanus to the seashore of Etruscan Luna. I had secured a carriage and extra post-horses the night before; therefore we found no obstacles upon the road, but eager drivers, quick relays, obsequious post-masters, change, speed, perpetual movement. The road itself is a noble one, and nobly entertained in all things but

accommodation for travellers. At Berceto, near the summit of the pass, we stopped just half an hour, to lunch off a mouldy hen and six eggs; but that was all the halt we made.

As we drove out of Parma, striking across the plain to the *ghiara* of the Taro, the sun rose over the austere autumnal landscape, with its withered vines and crimson haws. Christian, the mountaineer, who had never seen the sun rise from a flat horizon, stooped from the box to call attention to this daily recurring miracle, which on the plain of Lombardy is no less wonderful than on a rolling sea. From the village of Fornovo, where the Italian League was camped awaiting Charles VIII. upon that memorable July morn in 1495, the road strikes suddenly aside, gains a spur of the descending Apennines, and keeps this vantage till the pass of La Cisa is reached. Many windings are occasioned by thus adhering to *arêtes*, but the total result is a gradual ascent with free prospect over plain and mountain. The Apennines, built up upon a smaller scale than the Alps, perplexed in detail and entangled with cross sections and convergent systems, lend themselves to this plan of carrying high roads along their ridges instead of following the valley. What is beautiful in the landscape of that northern watershed is the subtlety, delicacy, variety, and intricacy of the mountain outlines. There is drawing wherever the eye falls. Each section of the vast expanse is a picture of tossed crests and complicated undulations. And over the whole sea of stationary billows, light is shed like an ethereal raiment, with spare colour—blue and grey, and parsimonious green—in the near foreground. The detail is somewhat dry and monotonous; for these so finely-moulded hills are made up of washed earth, the immemorial wrecks of earlier mountain ranges. Brown villages, not unlike those of midland England, low houses built of stone and tiled with stone, and square-towered churches, occur at rare intervals in cultivated hollows, where there are fields and fruit trees. Water is nowhere visible except in the wasteful river-beds. As we rise, we break into a wilder country, forested with oak, where oxen and goats are browsing. The turf is starred with lilac gentian, and crocus bells, but sparsely. Then comes the highest village, Berceto, with keen Alpine air. After that, broad rolling downs of yellowing grass and russet beech-scrub lead onward to the pass, La Cisa. The sense of breadth in composition is continually satisfied through this ascent by the fine-drawn lines, faint tints, and immense air-spaces of this landscape. Each little piece reminds one of England; but the geographical scale is enormously more grandiose, and the effect of majesty proportionately greater.

From La Cisa the road descends suddenly, for the southern escarpment of the Apennine, as of the Alpine, barrier is pitched at a far steeper angle than the northern. Yet there is no view of the sea. That is excluded by the lower hills which hem the Magra. The upper valley is beautiful, with verdant lawns and purple hill-sides breaking down into thick chestnut woods, through which we wound at a rapid

pace for nearly an hour. The leaves were still green, mellowing to golden ; but the fruit was ripe and heavy, ready at all points to fall. In the still October air the husks above our heads would loosen, and the brown nuts rustle through the foliage, and with a dull light patter tumble on the sod. At the foot of this rich forest, wedged in between huge buttresses, we found Pontremoli, and changed our horses here for the last time. It was Sunday, and the little town was alive with country-folk, tall stalwart fellows wearing peacock's feathers in their black slouched hats, and nut-brown maids.

From this point the valley of the Magra is exceeding rich with fruit-trees, vines, and olives. The tendrils of the vine are yellow now, and in some places hued like generous wine ; through their thick leaves the sun shot crimson. In one cool garden, as the day grew dusk, I noticed quince-trees laden with pale fruit, entangled with pomegranates—green spheres and ruddy amid burnished leaves. By the roadside too were many berries of bright hues ; the glowing red of haws and hips, the amber of the pyracanthus, the rose-tints of the spindle-wood. These make autumn even lovelier than spring. And then there was a wood of chestnuts carpeted with pale pink ling, a place to dream of in the twilight. But the main *motif* of this landscape was the indescribable Carrara range, an island of pure form and shooting peaks, solid marble, crystalline in shape and texture, faintly blue against the blue sky, from which they were but scarce divided. These mountains close the valley to south-east, and seem as though they belonged to another and more celestial region.

Soon the sunlight was gone, and moonrise came to close the day, as we rolled onward to Sarzana, through arundo donax and vine-girdled olive trees and villages, where contadini lounged upon the bridges. There was a stream of sound in our ears, and in my brain a rhythmic dance of beauties caught through the long-drawn glorious golden autumn-day.

III.

FOSDINOVO.

The hamlet and the castle of Fosdinovo stand upon a mountain-spur above Sarzana, commanding the valley of the Magra and the plains of Luni. This is an ancient fief of the Malaspina house, and is still in the possession of the Marquis of that name.

The road to Fosdinovo strikes across the level through an avenue of plane-trees, shedding their discoloured leaves. It then takes to the open fields, bordered with tall reeds waving from the foss on either hand, where grapes are hanging to the vines. The country-folk allow their vines to climb into the olives, and these golden festoons are a great ornament to the grey branches. The berries on the trees are still quite green, and it is a good olive season. Leaving the main road, we pass a villa of the Malaspini, shrouded in immense thickets of sweet bay and

ilex, forming a grove for the Nymphs or Pan. Here may you see just such clean stems and lucid foliage as Gian Bellini painted, inch by inch, in his Peter Martyr picture. The place is neglected now; the semi-circular seats of white Carrara marble are stained with green mosses, the altars chipped, the fountains choked with bay-leaves; and the rose-trees, escaped from what were once trim garden alleys, have gone wandering a-riot into country hedges. There is no demarcation between the great man's villa and the neighbouring farms. From this point the path rises; and the barren hillside is a-bloom with late-flowering myrtles. Why did the Greeks consecrate these myrtle-rods to Death as well as Love? Electra complained that her father's tomb had not received the honour of the myrtle-branch; and the Athenians wreathed their swords with myrtle in memory of Harmodius. Thinking of these matters, I cannot but remember lines of Greek, which have themselves the rectitude and elasticity of myrtle-wands:

καὶ προσπεσῶν ἐκλαυσ' ἐρημίας τυχῶν
 σπονδὰς τε λύσας ἄσκον ὃν φέρω ξένοισ
 ἔσπεισα τύμβῳ δ' ἀμφέθηκα μυρσίνας.

As we approach Fosdinovo, the hills above us gain sublimity; the prospect over plain and sea—the fields where Luna was, the widening bay of Spezia—grows ever grander. The castle is a ruin, still capable of partial habitation, and now undergoing repair—the state in which a ruin looks most sordid and forlorn. How strange it is, too, that, to enforce this sense of desolation, sad dishevelled weeds cling ever to such antique masonry! Here are the henbane, the sow thistle, the wild cucumber. At Avignon, at Orvieto, at Dolceacqua, at Les Baux, we never missed them. And they have the dusty courtyards, the massive portals, where portcullises still threaten, of Fosdinovo to themselves. Over the gate, and here and there on corbels, are carved the arms of Malaspina—a barren thorn-tree, gnarled with the geometrical precision of heraldic irony.

Leaning from the narrow windows of this castle, with the spacious view to westward, I thought of Dante. There is a little old neglected garden, full to south, enclosed upon a rampart which commands the Borgo, where we found frail canker-roses and yellow amaryllis. Here, perhaps, he may have sat with ladies—for this was the Marchesa's pleasure; or may have watched through a short summer's night, until he saw that *tremolar della marina*, portending dawn, which afterwards he painted in the *Purgatory*. For Dante, in this castle, was the guest of Moroello Malaspina, what time he was yet finishing the *Inferno*.

From Fosdinovo one can trace the Magra work its way out seaward, not into the plain where once the *candentia mœnia Lunæ* flashed sunrise from their battlements, but close beside the little hills which back the southern arm of the Spezzian gulf. At the extreme end of that promontory, called del Corvo, stood the Benedictine Convent of S. Croce; and it was here in 1309, if we may trust to tradition, that

Dante, before his projected journey into France, appeared and left the first part of his poem with the prior. Fra Ilario, such was the good father's name, received commission to transmit the *Inferno* to Ugucione della Faggiuola; and he subsequently recorded the fact of Dante's visit in a letter which, though its genuineness has been called in question, is far too interesting for omission:—

“I say, then, that when this man was on his way to lands beyond our mountains, and was passing through the diocese of Luni, whether the sacredness of the spot or some other reason moved him, he visited our convent. As soon as I perceived that he was unknown to myself and to my brethren, I questioned of him what he wanted; and seeing that he answered nought, again I asked him what he wanted. Thereat he, looking round upon the brethren who were with me, answered—Peace. This making me the more eager to know of what condition was the man, I withdrew him from the rest, and after conversation with him, knew that it was Dante. For though before that day I never saw him, his fame had reached me a long time since. When he noticed that my attention was wholly fixed upon him, and recognised how eagerly I waited for his words, he drew a little book from his breast and gave it to me frankly. ‘Here,’ he said, ‘is one part of my work, which peradventure you have never seen. This memento I leave you that you may the more firmly keep me in mind.’ After he had showed the book, I took it with gratitude, and in his presence fixed my eyes on it attentively. Seeing that it was written in the vulgar dialect, I showed thereat some wonder, and he asked the reason of my doubt. I answered that I wondered at the language, seeing that it seemed not merely difficult, but quite impossible to explain in common speech such weighty matters, and also that a popular style appeared unsuited for the clothing of science so profound. To which, in reply, he said:—‘You are doubtless reasonable in what you think; for when at first the seed, which, peradventure, dropped from heaven, was shooting up into the purpose of my work, I chose for it the due and customary speech; nor did I merely choose it, but keeping to the usages of poetry, I began my labour thus:*

Ultima regna canam, fluido contermina mundo,
Spiritus quæ lata patent, quæ præmia solvunt
Pro meritis cuiusque suis.

“‘Yet when I reconsidered the circumstances of the present age, I saw that the songs of famous poets went almost for nought; wherefore, men of gentle blood, who wrote in better times, abandon the liberal arts to the plebeian crowd. Accordingly, I laid aside the little lyre, to which at first I trusted, and tuned another, suited to the sense of modern men for it is idle to set solid food before the lips of sucklings.’”

* “Of the furthest realms will I sing, conterminous with the world of waters, which spread abroad for souls, doomed each to the reward of his deserts.”

This apparition of Dante among the monks in their sea-girt convent may be criticised as melodramatic. But it is impressive; and the legend of his life, so far as I am aware, yields no other incident from his residence in Lunigiana.

IV.

LA SPEZIA.

While we were at Fosdinovo the sky filmed over, and there came a halo round the sun. This portended change; and by evening, after we had reached La Spezia, earth, sea, and air were conscious of a coming tempest. At night I went down to the shore, and paced the sea-wall they have lately built along the Rada. The moon was up, but over-driven with dry smoky clouds, now thickening to blackness over the whole bay, now leaving intervals through which the light poured fitfully and fretfully upon the wrinkled waves, and ever and anon they shuddered with electric gleams which were not actual lightning. Heaven seemed to be descending on the sea; one might have fancied that some powerful charms were drawing down the moon with influence malign upon those still resisting billows. For not as yet the gulf was troubled to its depth, and not as yet the breakers dashed in foam against the moonlight-smitten promontories. There was but an uneasy murmuring of wave to wave; a whispering of wind, that stooped its wing and hissed along the surface, and withdrew into the mystery of clouds again; a momentary chafing of churned water round the harbour piers, subsiding into silence petulant and sullen. I leaned against an iron stanchion, and longed for the sea's message. But nothing came to me, and the drowned secret of Shelley's death those waves which were his grave revealed not.

Howler and scooper of storms! Capricious and dainty sea!

Meanwhile the incantation swelled in shrillness, the electric shudders deepened. Alone in this elemental overture to tempest I took no note of time, but felt through self-abandonment to the symphonic influence, how sea and air, and clouds akin to both, were dealing with each other complainingly, and in compliance to some maker of unrest within them. A touch upon my shoulder broke this trance; I turned and saw a boy beside me in a coastguard's uniform. Federigo was on patrol that night; but my English accent soon assured him that I was no contrabbandiere, and he too leaned against the stanchion and told me his short story. He was in his nineteenth year, and came from Florence where his people live in the Borgo Ognissanti. He had all the brightness of the Tuscan folk, a sort of innocent malice mixed with *espièglerie*. It was diverting to see the airs he gave himself on the strength of his new military dignity, his gun, and uniform, and night duty on the shore. I could not help humming to myself *Non più andrai*; for Federigo was a sort of Tuscan Cherubino. We talked about picture galleries and

libraries in Florence, and I had to hear his favourite passages from the Italian poets. And then there came the plots of Jules Verne's stories and marvellous narrations about *l'uomo cavallo*, *l'uomo volante*, *l'uomo pesce*. The last of these personages turned out to be Paolo Boynton (so pronounced), who had swum the Arno in his diving dress, passing the several bridges, and when he came to the great weir "allora tutti stare con bocca aperta." Meanwhile the storm grew serious, and our conversation changed. Federigo told me about the terrible sun-stricken sand-shores of the Riviera, burning in summer noon, over which the coastguard has to tramp, their perils from falling stones in storm, and the trains that come rushing from those narrow tunnels on the midnight line of march. It is a hard life; and the thirst for adventure which drove this boy—il più matto di tutta la famiglia—to adopt it, seems well-nigh quenched. And still, with a return to Giulio Verne, he talked enthusiastically of deserting, of getting on board a merchant ship, and working his way to southern islands where wonders are.

A furious blast swept the whole sky for a moment almost clear. The moonlight fell, with racing cloud-shadows, upon sea and hills, the lights of Lerici, the great *fanali* at the entrance of the gulf, and Federigo's upturned handsome face. Then all again was whirled in mist and foam; one breaker smote the sea-wall in a surge of froth, another plunged upon its heels; with inconceivable swiftness came rain; lightning deluged the expanse of surf, and showed the windy trees bent landward by the squall. It was long past midnight now, and the storm was on us for the space of three days.

V.

PORTO VENERE.

The next three days I spent in the Croce di Malta, listening to the sea and studying Euripides. The wind went worrying on, and a line of surf leapt on the sea-wall always to the same height. The hills all round were inky black and weary. The *Iphigenia in Tauris* is a beautiful picture of sisterly love and comradeship, the two purest affections that human nature yields. I do not think sufficient justice has been done by critics to the originality and strength of character in Pylades. He is the very ideal of companionship in arms—fierce as a tiger and cunning as a fox against his foes, but tender as a woman to his suffering friend, willing to face all dangers in common with Orestes, and refusing to live in his friend's death:—

ἀλλ' ὦ ποθεινὸν ὄνομ' ὀμιλίας ἐμῆς.

At night the wild libeccio still rose, with floods of rain and lightning poured upon the waste. I thought of the Florentine patrol. Is he out in it, and where?

At last there came a lull. When we rose on the fourth morning, the sky was sulky, spent and sleepy after storm—the air as soft and

tepid as boiled milk or steaming flannel. We drove along the shore to Porto Venere, passing the arsenals and dockyards, which have changed the face of Spezia since Shelley knew it. This side of the gulf is not so rich in vegetation as the other, probably because it lies open to the winds from the Carrara mountains. The chestnuts come down to the shore in many places, bringing with them the wild mountain side. To make up for this lack of luxuriance, the coast is furrowed with a succession of tiny harbours, where the fishing-boats rest at anchor. There are many villages upon the spurs of hills, and on the headlands naval stations, hospitals, lazaretti, and prisons. A prickly bindweed (the *smilax sarsaparilla*) forms a feature in the near landscape, with its creamy odoriferous blossoms, coral berries, and glossy thorned leaves.

A turn of the road brought Porto Venere in sight, and on its grey walls flashed a gleam of watery sunlight. The village consists of one long narrow street, the houses on the left side hanging sheer above the sea. Their doors at the back open on to cliffs, which drop about fifty feet upon the water. A line of ancient walls, with medieval battlements and shells of chambers suspended midway between earth and sky, runs up the rock behind the town; and this wall is pierced with a deep gateway, above which the inn is piled. We had our lunch in a room opening upon the town-gate, adorned with a deep-cut Pisan arch enclosing images and frescoes—a curious episode in a place devoted to the jollity of smugglers and seafaring folk. The whole house was such as Tintoretto loved to paint—huge wooden rafters; open chimneys with pent-house canopies of stone, where the cauldrons hung above logs of chestnut; rude low tables spread with coarse linen embroidered at the edges, and laden with plates of fishes, fruit, quaint glass, big-bellied jugs of earthenware, and flasks of yellow wine. The people of the place were lounging round in lazy attitudes. There were odd nooks and corners everywhere; unexpected staircases with windows slanting through the thickness of the town-wall; pictures of saints; high-zoned serving women, on whose broad shoulders lay big coral beads; smoke-blackened roofs, and balconies that opened on the sea. The house was inexhaustible in motives for pictures.

We walked up the street, attended by a rabble rout of boys—*diavoli scatenati*—clean, grinning, white-teethed, who kept incessantly shouting, “Soldo, soldo!” I do not know why these sea-urchins are so far more irrepressible than their land brethren. But it is always thus in Italy. They take an imperturbable delight in noise and mere annoyance. I shall never forget the sea-roar of Porto Venere, with that shrill obligato, “Soldo, soldo, soldo!” rattling like a dropping fire from lungs of brass.

At the end of Porto Venere is a withered and abandoned city, climbing the cliffs of S. Pietro; and on the headland stands the ruined church, built by Pisans with alternate rows of white and black marble, upon the site of an old temple of Venus. This is a modest and pure piece of Gothic architecture, fair in desolation, refined and dignified, and

not unworthy in its grace of the dead Cyprian goddess. Through its broken lancets the sea-wind whistles, and the vast reaches of the Tyrrhene gulf are seen. Samphire sprouts between the blocks of marble, and in sheltered nooks the caper hangs her beautiful purpureal snowy bloom.

The headland is a bold block of white limestone, stained with red. It has the pitch of Exmoor stooping to the sea near Lynton. To north, as one looks along the coast, the line is broken by Porto Fino's amethystine promontory; and in the vaporous distance we could trace the Riviera mountains, shadowy and blue. The sea came roaring, rolling in with tawny breakers; but, far out, it sparkled in pure azure, and the cloud-shadows over it were violet. Where Corsica should have been seen, soared banks of fleecy, broad-domed, alabaster clouds.

This point, once dedicate to Venus, now to Peter—both, be it remembered, fishers of men—is one of the most singular in Europe. The island of Palmaria, rich in veined marbles, shelters the port; so that, outside, the sea rages, while underneath the town, reached by a narrow strait, there is a windless calm. It was not without reason that our Lady of Beauty took this fair gulf to herself; and now that she has long been dispossessed, her memory lingers yet in names. For Porto Venere remembers her, and Lerici is only Eryx. There is a grotto here, where an inscription tells us that Byron once "tempted the Ligurian waves." It is just such a *σπηλαῖον* as might have inspired Euripides when he described the refuge of Orestes in *Iphigenia*.

VI.

LERICI.

Libeccio at last had swept the sky clear. The gulf was ridged with foam-fleeced breakers, and the water churned into green, tawny wastes. But overhead there flew the softest clouds, all silvery, dispersed in flocks. It is the day for pilgrimage to what was Shelley's home.

After following the shore a little way, the road to Lerici breaks into the low hills which part La Spezia from Sarzana. The soil is red, and overgrown with arbutus and pinaster, like the country around Cannes. Through the scattered trees it winds gently upwards, with frequent views across the gulf, and then descends into a land rich with olives—a genuine Riviera landscape, where the mountain-slopes are hoary, and spikelets of innumerable light-flashing leaves twinkle against a blue sea-misty deep. The walls here are not unfrequently adorned with bas-reliefs of Carrara marble—saints and madonnas very delicately wrought, as though they were love-labours of sculptors who had passed a summer on this shore. San Terenzio is soon discovered low upon the sands to the right, nestling under little cliffs; and then the high-built castle of Lerici comes in sight, looking across the bay to Porto Venere—one Aphrodite calling to the other, with the foam between. The

village is piled around its cove with tall and picturesquely-coloured houses; the molo and the fishing-boats lie just beneath the castle. There is one point of the descending carriage road where all this gracefulness is seen, framed by the boughs of olive branches, swaying, wind-ruffled, laughing the many-twinkling smiles of ocean back from their grey leaves. Here *Erycina ridens* is at home. And, as we stayed to dwell upon the beauty of the scene, came women from the bay below—bare-footed, straight as willow wands, with burnished copper bowls upon their heads. These women have the port of goddesses, deep-bosomed, with the length of thigh and springing ankles that betoken strength no less than elasticity and grace. The hair of some of them was golden, rippling in little curls around brown brows and glowing eyes. Pale lilac blent with orange on their dress, and coral beads hung from their ears.

At Lerici we took a boat and pushed into the rolling breakers. Christian now felt the movement of the sea for the first time. This was rather a rude trial, for the grey-maned monsters played, as it seemed, at will with our cockle-shell, tumbling in dolphin curves to reach the shore. Our boatmen knew all about Shelley and the Casa Magni. It is not at Lerici, but close to San Terenzio, upon the south side of the village. Looking across the bay from the molo, one could clearly see its square white mass, tiled roof, and terrace built on rude arcades with a broad orange awning. Trelawny's description hardly prepares one for so considerable a place. I think the English exiles of that period must have been exacting if the Casa Magni seemed to them no better than a bathing-house.

We left our boat at the jetty, and walked through some gardens to the villa. There we were kindly entertained by the present occupiers, who, when I asked them whether such visits as ours were not a great annoyance, gently but feelingly replied: "It is not so bad now as it used to be." The English gentleman who rents the Casa Magni has known it uninterruptedly since Shelley's death, and has used it for *villeggiatura* during the last thirty years. We found him in the central sitting-room, which readers of Trelawny's *Recollections* have so often pictured to themselves. The large oval table, the settees round the walls, and some of the pictures are still unchanged. As we sat talking, I laughed to think of that luncheon party, when Shelley lost his clothes, and came naked, dripping with sea-water, into the room, protected by the skirts of the sympathising waiting-maid. And then I wondered where they found him on the night when he stood screaming in his sleep, after the vision of his veiled self, with its question, "*Siete soddisfatto?*"

There were great ilexes behind the house in Shelley's time, which have been cut down, and near these he is said to have sat and written the *Triumph of Life*. Some new houses, too, have been built between the villa and the town; otherwise the place is unaltered. Only an awning has been added to protect the terrace from the sun. I walked out on this terrace, where Shelley used to listen to Jane's singing. The

sea was fretting at its base, just as Mrs. Shelley says it did when the Don Juan disappeared.

From San Terenzio we walked back to Lerici through olive woods, attended by a memory which toned the almost overpowering beauty of the place to sadness.

VII.

VIAREGGIO.

The same memory drew us, a few days later, to the spot where Shelley's body was burned. Viareggio is fast becoming a fashionable watering-place for the people of Florence and Lucca, who seek fresher air and simpler living than Livorno offers. It has the usual new inns and improvised lodging-houses of such places, built on the outskirts of a little fishing village, with a boundless stretch of noble sands. There is a wooden pier on which we walked, watching the long roll of waves, foam-flaked, and quivering with moonlight. The Apennines faded into the grey sky beyond, and the sea-wind was good to breathe. There is a feeling of "immensity, liberty, action" here, which is not common in Italy. It reminds us of England; and to-night the Mediterranean had the rough force of a tidal sea.

Morning revealed beauty enough in Viareggio to surprise even one who expects from Italy all forms of loveliness. The sand-dunes stretch for miles between the sea and a low wood of stone pines, with the Carrara hills descending from their glittering pinnacles by long lines to the headlands of the Spezzian Gulf. The immeasurable distance was all painted in sky-blue and amethyst; then came the golden green of the dwarf firs; and then dry yellow in the grasses of the dunes; and then the many-tinted sea, with surf tossed up against the furthest cliffs. It is a wonderful and tragic view, to which no painter but the Roman Costa has done justice; and he, it may be said, has made this landscape of the Carrarese his own. The space between sand and pine-wood was covered with faint, yellow, evening primroses. They flickered like little harmless flames in sun and shadow, and the spires of the Carrara range were giant flames transformed to marble. The memory of that day described by Trelawny in a passage of immortal English prose, when he and Byron and Leigh Hunt stood beside the funeral pyre, and libations were poured, and the *Cor Cordium* was found inviolate among the ashes, turned all my thoughts to flame beneath the gentle autumn sky.

Still haunted by these memories, we took the carriage road to Pisa, over which Shelley's friends had hurried to and fro through those last days. It passes an immense forest of stone-pines—aisles, and avenues; undergrowth of ilex, laurustinus, gorse, and myrtle; the crowded cyclamens, the solemn silence of the trees; the winds hushed in their velvet roof and stationary domes of verdure.

Helen in the Wood.

I LEFT the yew tree's shadow, thrown
 Slantwise across the graves and grown
 So long I knew the day waxed late,
 And opened wide the churchyard gate;
 Paused there, for from the church behind
 Voices of women clave the wind,
 And organ music rose and rang:
 I heard the village choir that sang.
 But I, who had no heart for song,
 Sighed, shut the gate, and went along
 The lane, where rows of elms, wind-vexed,
 Nodded fantastic heads, perplexed
 At winter's dimly-boded woes.
 At last the trees grew thick and close.
 The rain was over, but the copse
 Shoots down at whiles some after-drops,
 Though sunshine, through wet branches seen,
 Sheltered in living flakes of green,
 And where below ground ivy grew
 A fallen heaven lay darkly blue.
 So soon! The tempest scarce was done,
 And all the web world sang and shone
 Lovelier yet! I think the place
 Found but in grief an added grace,
 While I—the tears fell and I sighed—
 It was a year since Helen died.

At length I raised my eyes. Behold
 The branches' green, the bracken's gold
 Gained a new meaning in my sight,
 That found the centre of their light;
 For down the dim wood-arches came—
 Was it a star? Was it a glame?
 No; there my Helen went—all white.

To shield her from the branches' harms
She lifted up her lovely arms;
Just as of old, above the large
Sweet eyes her hair made golden marge;
Through tangled fern, through grass still wet,
Her feet went firmly on; and yet
I knew, although no word was said,
She did not live, she was not dead.
At last she neared my watching place:
She paused and looked me in the face,
Smiled once her smile that understood,
Passed—and how lonely was the wood!

I trod the way I went before,
I passed the church's open door;
The hymn went pealing up the sky—
"Oh, love, how deep, how broad, how high!"

A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

Bhagoo.

I.

ALLOW me to introduce to you Bhagoo, the son of Bhiccoo, the Man of Buffalo Cows, as he shamles slowly after the two or three buffaloes from which he derives his surname. He is simply arrayed in a strip of cotton cloth—a costume eminently adapted to show to their fullest advantage his natural charms, consisting of a bony frame, supported on two calfless legs, and surmounted by a head closely shaven, all save one lock of hair, twisted into a knot on the top of his skull. His chin and armpits are also close shaven; but on his chest, arms, and legs grow thick tangled tufts of coarse hair, scarcely blacker than the skin beneath. His one serviceable eye is dark in colour, keen of sight, and set in a muddy white. The other was blinded long ago by the visitation of one of the most revered of his goddesses, Small-pox, who has also seamed and scarred his face in all directions. Bhagoo has but recently arrived in this neighbourhood from his ancestral halls. These consist of a single hut, perched on the bare slope of a distant hill, thatched with dried grass, and built of bamboos, the interstices between which are filled with a mixture of wet mud and cowdung, of which material the floor is also composed.

Here, from a time since when the memory of man runneth not to the contrary, Bhagoo's ancestors, with all their kith and kin, dwelt together in unity. Here, from the death of his father until his migration to the town, Bhagoo reigned as the head of his undivided family, the members of which, at the time of our acquaintance with him, are Bhagoo, his wife, and four little naked children; Bhagoo's two brothers Dhondoo and Nuthoo; and Dhondoo's wife and child; Nuthoo is also married, but his wife still resides with her parents, and will continue to do so till her tenth birthday. Besides the persons already enumerated there is Bhagoo's mother; but she can hardly be reckoned a member of the family, for, when she became a widow, her head was shaved, and she had to act as the lowest drudge of the household.

These eleven persons, with their two bullocks, are the only inhabitants of their one-roomed hut. The buffalo cows and goats are stabled at night in an open pen hard by, and are never admitted to the interior of the hut, except when, by reason of sickness or extreme youth, one requires careful nursing. Pigs there are none, nor poultry. The former are an abomination unto the men of Bhagoo's persuasion, and the latter could never survive the climatic extremes of drought and moisture that annually visit this little mountain farm.

Such are the home of Bhagoo, his family, and live stock. Of their life one day telleth another with such precision that any may be taken as a specimen of all; premising only that, according to the season, the agricultural pursuits will slightly vary, and in the rainy months be suspended altogether. Dark, cold, wet, and cheerless are those months, fraught with constant discomfort and not unfrequent danger from waterspouts, lightning-strokes, and fierce storms of wind. The mud floor of the hut soon becomes a quagmire; and then come racking coughs, ague chills, and fever. The farm yields nothing and affords no employment. So, partly for pastime, and partly to obtain a savoury addition to his scanty meal of dried grain, the farmer betakes himself to the steep beds of the torrents. There he climbs among the slippery stones, searching for the nimble little crabs, which the first fall of rain has invited forth from the mysterious fastnesses where they have been spending the long summer. Immediately on capturing one he twists off its claws, and stores the mutilated trunk away in his waist-cloth, until such time as he shall reach home, when it will be laid on its back on the embers and slowly toasted to his liking.

In fine weather, however, Bhagoo's days are more enjoyable. With the first appearance of dawn the door of the hut opens, and the three men of the family come out huddled in coarse black blankets. Squatting on the ground they smoke cigarettes made of rank sun-dried tobacco, rolled in leaves and tied up with fibres of grass, while their mother starts for the well with two large round-bottomed jars of black earthenware. One of these when filled she will balance deftly on her head, and carry the other resting against her hip. She will have to make many journeys before she has got all the water needed for the day's consumption. Long ere then her shrivelled old legs will be feeling heavy and weak, and her bare wrinkled back be aching sorely. But even then there will be no rest; for the flat cowdung cakes, to be used for fuel, will have to be made and put in the sun to dry. Then she will have to help in the cooking of the midday meal. When this has been disposed of, she must assist in cleaning the cooking-pots, the drinking-vessels, and the great brazen dish in which the meal was served, and from which the family, seated round it on the ground, helped themselves by thrusting their right hands into the pile of smoking rice. During the discussion of this meal the old lady enjoys her first breathing time, and, after the others have satisfied their appetites, she will be allowed to retire to her corner with the broken fragments that remain. So that by the time the light task of "washing up" is finished she will have renewed her strength like an eagle, and be ready for the really laborious duty of grinding corn. When this is done she must get the clothes of such of the family as indulge in those luxuries which were worn during the previous day, and with them and the water-jars make her way again to the well. Here she will wash the clothes by rinsing them in water, and slapping them against a stone. After this she will spread them in

the sun to dry, and herself proceed to the enjoyment of an *al fresco* bath. Squatting on a stone she scrapes herself all over with a rough fragment of rock, and then deluges herself out of the great water-pots. When these are exhausted, and the good woman's simple toilet is completed, she makes the clothes into a bundle, which she slings at her back, once more refills the water-pots, and makes the best of her way home. Here she will arrive so late that when she has stored the cowdung cakes it will be time to cook the evening meal. When this has been disposed of, she will be glad to wrap herself in her blanket, and lay her weary bones on the bare floor in her corner of the hut.

But this is a long digression, during which we have left Bhagoo and his brothers smoking at the door of their hut while their mother hurries to the well for the water for their baths. These they take much in her fashion, except that they are more particular as to their teeth, perhaps because they have more. With the end of a twig reduced by mastication to a fibrous state, they polish their teeth on all sides, interspersing the operation with frequent gurglings, spittings, expectorations, and all hideous sounds, guttural and stomachic. Then sticking out their tongues till they seem to be coming out by their roots, they scrape those unruly members with a blade of grass. Lastly, having made themselves sick by putting their fingers down their throats, they rinse out their mouths with water, and consider their mucous membranes clean for the day.

So soon as the brothers have finished their toilets, each will provide himself with a leathern wallet containing a few leaves, two or three pieces of betel-nut, and a pinch of lime. Out of these he will make unto himself a quid wherewith to solace himself in the intervals of labour. This morsel induces a copious secretion of saliva, coloured a fine red by the betel; so that any friend of Bhagoo's, unacquainted with his habits, might feel some anxiety on seeing him apparently spitting blood in large quantities. But a few minutes' observation will disperse this anxiety as he sees with what relish he chews, how he turns the quid over in his mouth, thereby displaying tongue, teeth, and lips, all from the same cause stained with the same rich red, and with what impartial liberality he showers the sanguine stream on all things within reach. Thus simply equipped do the brothers take the field. Bhagoo goes to tend the buffaloes of Narayen, the son of Wasudew, of the family of the Astrologers, the rich Brahmin landowner of those parts. Dhondoo harnesses the two bullocks to the wooden plough, with which he proceeds to scratch up a portion of the hill side, prepared for cultivation by the simple process of setting fire to it. Nuthoo departs to cut the long coarse grass already withered into hay, on ledges seemingly inaccessible to any save monkeys. When he has cut enough for one load, he will tie it in a bundle weighing about a quarter of a hundredweight, which he will balance on his head, and therewith walk up the perpendicular cliff above him, as we should walk upstairs, to a village on the top, where he

will dispose of his burden for a price varying from fourpence halfpenny to sixpence three farthings.

While the gentlemen of the family are decorating their persons in the manner above related, the ladies are employed in milking the buffalo cows and goats. This done, charge of them will be handed over to Bhagoo's eldest child, a girl seven years old. She, armed with a stick, and accompanied by her brother, aged four, who carries a small bow with two strings joined together with a piece of leather, will drive them off into the jungle, where they will pick up such fare as pleases them best. Meanwhile their guardians will trouble themselves very little about them. Choosing some shady spot, they will spend the greater part of the day in solemn sedentary games, with small stones and fragments of stick for toys. Or they will wander about, plucking from bush and tree berry and fruit, eating as many as they can presently stuff into their little bellies, and storing the rest to be carried home in the evening. Occasionally only will they dash among the bushes to prevent the cattle straying too far, and with shrill cries, blows, and showers of stones, drive whither they will that herd of monsters, any one of which could, with a single toss of its head, or one stamp of its foot, effectually dispose of its small tormentor. From these expeditions the little girl generally returns with a double handful of cowdung. All this she will eventually roll up into a large ball, and carry home on her head for her grandmother to pat into cakes. When evening draws on, the two children will collect their flocks and their herds, and drive them home to be milked and stabled. The cows will readily obey the summons of the little maid, but the goats are sad truants. Call as she will she cannot persuade them to leave the last-found dainty. Then must recourse be had to the *fortiter in re*. The little boy climbs to the top of steep knoll or tall rock, and wherever he sees ear, horn, flank, or hoof, lets fly at it a stone from the small two-stringed bow. The well directed artillery renders the position no longer tenable. Forth troop the goats and surrender at discretion.

But in the meantime we have left the ladies of the family with their day's work barely begun. Dhondoo's wife, with her infant astride on her hip, balances on her head a pile of round-bottomed brass pots, full of milk. On the top of these she places a basket, containing unripe mangoes and bundles of leaves for cigarettes. Thus encumbered she starts for the village at the top of the hill by a narrow track, scarcely less steep than that chosen by Nuthoo. She will arrive at the bazaar among the first, and after disposing of her load, except the baby and the empty vessels, for a few halfpence, beat home again in time to help in the preparation of the midday meal. Afterwards she and Mrs. Bhagoo will together take a bath on the model of the old widow's, save that they will enjoy the advantages of mutual assistance in holy-stoning each other's backs. They will then by turns each lie with her head in the lap of the other, and stretched in the sun, with half-closed eyes, luxuriously undergo the

process vulgarly known as lousing. Mrs. Bhagoo, in the absence of her sister-in-law, will first sweep the floor of the hut with a bundle of date-palm leaves. Then she will spread all the bedding in the sun, for your sunshine is a notable destroyer of your bug, which infests the interior of Bhagoo's abode in great force. This done she summons her two youngest sons, squatted at the door, busily engaged in making dirt-pies, and, despite much shrill remonstrance, lays them flat on a stone and trickles water over them from a brass pot in her left hand, while she polishes them with her right. After this a run in the sun quickly dries them, while she equips herself for her duties out of doors with a long stick and an empty basket. Thus armed and accompanied by her children, she proceeds to knock down from the trees in the neighbourhood various and sundry fruits, chiefly unripe mangoes, which to-morrow will be sold in the bazaar. At the same time she collects firewood enough for the use of the household that day, which she ties up in two bundles, large and small, the former to be carried by herself, the latter by the toddler at her side. Proud of his might the three-year-old hero swaggers grandly home with his burden on his head, fancying himself as good a man as any giant that ever carried a mountain; while his little brother, from his inglorious position on his mother's hip, regards him with feelings of envy and admiration. But it may be asked why did Bhagoo leave his prosperous farm, happy family, *placens uxor*, naked pickaninies, and all the rest of them, to move our bile by driving buffaloes between the wind and our nobility? Thereby hangs the tale which I am trying to tell, but have prefaced with a prolix introduction in order that you might start with a thorough acquaintance with the hero.

II.

For some years preceding his decease, Bhiccoo had been involved in difficulties. In the first place, he had been induced by Vishnoo, the son of Chintamon, of the family of the Blue Jays, a clever, but unscrupulous lawyer of his acquaintance, to contest with the Crown his right to cut underwood on a certain strip of waste land adjoining his farm. The value of this privilege would have been about one shilling a year. The litigation lasted for three years. During this time every point was appealed from one Court to another, till it reached the highest tribunal in the country. At last the suit was decided against Bhiccoo. Then came the day of settlement with the Blue Jay for his professional services, and Bhiccoo found a considerable balance against him at the foot of his lawyer's bill of costs. As he had not the cash by him wherewith to liquidate the claim, he was compelled to pass a promissory note for the amount. The security being none of the best, the Blue Jay considered he was acting liberally by his client in taking his note payable to bearer three months after date for only twice the amount due, and interest at the rate of *six per cent. per mensem*. This document he was careful to negotiate at once with Gumna, the son of Bhugga, the man of Marwar, the money-

lender and bill-discounter of the neighbourhood. This worthy, on the due date, presented the note for payment; and on Bhiccoo's failure to meet it, consented to cancel it, provided Bhiccoo would execute to him a mortgage of his farm, payable at the expiration of one year, for thrice the amount due on the promissory note, and interest at eight *per cent. per mensem*. Bhiccoo, not understanding much of this arrangement, except that he thereby avoided immediate payment, readily agreed. Unfortunately, however, he omitted to obtain possession of the promissory note. Gumna shortly afterwards finding it among his papers, with no sign of having been cancelled, sued Bhiccoo on it; and the latter, never having had any very clear idea himself on his dealings with the money-lender, failed to make the judge understand them. Thus Gumna gained a decree for payment of the amount due on the note, and proceeded to enforce it by the attachment and sale of a sufficient quantity of Bhiccoo's movable property. The hut and fields still remained security for the payment of the mortgage, which Gumna was in no hurry to enforce so long as his victim continued to pay him interest at the rate of ninety-six *per cent. per annum*.

While things were in this state, Bhiccoo had to incur another heavy expense in the wedding of his eldest son Bhagoo, who, being nearly sixteen years old, must speedily be married, or be for ever a hissing and a reproach. Accordingly the ladies of the family contributed their few clumsy ornaments of gold and silver, retaining barely enough decorations of ear, nose, neck, arm, finger, ankle and toe to do honour to the occasion. But the sum so raised was insufficient, even when eked out by the sale of such of the household utensils and bedding as could be spared. The balance was raised by arrangement with Muccon, the son of Sewlal, the neighbouring grain merchant. He consented to advance the twelve pounds still wanted, on condition of receiving the produce of the farm for the next two years. Such portion as Bhiccoo retained for the support of himself and his family, Muccon treated as a fresh loan, bearing interest at the rate of seventy-five *per cent. per annum*. Bhiccoo could neither read nor write, nor did he understand accounts. Accordingly when, at the end of two years, Muccon showed him that, far from having paid off the original loan of twelve pounds, he had only paid six, while in what he had retained he had received twelve more, and the interest being eighteen, he was thirty-six pounds in debt, Bhiccoo could not deny the fact. Shortly after he was gathered to his fathers, and Bhagoo succeeded to the management of the crippled estate.

For a few years the interest on the loans was paid somehow, and the family contrived to subsist. But, of course, it was not possible, even if it had been in the nature of our friends so to do, to "lay by something for a rainy day," which came at last in the shape of a drought the like of which was not in the memory of the oldest inhabitant. The seed perished in the ground, the cattle died of thirst, and there was a famine in the land. Short commons this year, and no seed for next, were in

themselves a gloomy prospect for Bhagoo, burdened with debt and an increasing family. But he had, besides, the misfortune to attract the notice of the great, and, like many another good man, was ruined thereby. It chanced that the chief executive officer of the district arrived from England, bringing with him his young bride, as good and beautiful a specimen as one could wish to see of the good and beautiful race of young British gentlewomen. Bred as she had been to take a kindly interest in all around, it had been a part of her religion to make acquaintance with the poor on her father's estate, and, where she could, to minister to their wants. Soon after her arrival at her new home her husband's duties summoned him away, and she was unable to accompany him. But, in the little station where she was left, she began to hear harrowing tales of the famine told by eye-witnesses, who, strong bearded men though they were, could not speak with dry eyes and steady voice of what they had seen. They told of gaunt famished men lying down to die by the roadside of sheer hunger; of hollow-eyed, emaciated women offering for sale their starving babies—aye, and what should be dearer to a woman even than her child—for the price of a piece of bread; of miles of country so ravaged by Famine and her fell sister Pestilence, that the living sufficed not to convey the dead out of sight, so that hundreds of human corpses lay rotting beneath a tropical sun, mangled by jackals, dogs, and filthy carrion birds, and hourly breeding more fearful disease. When the lady heard such tales as these, she felt that here was such a call as had never before been made upon her, and, like the brave English girl she was, she determined to do battle with all her might against this manifold misery, more gigantic than any she had ever before imagined. Unfortunately her husband was too far away for her to consult him as to how best to perform the task she proposed to herself, and her impulsive nature could not brook the thought of any delay. Every hour was precious, and she was sure he could never object to her striving to be of use to those who needed her help. So she proceeded at once to carry out the plan of action which she would have followed in her father's house—to visit the neighbouring poor in their wretched homes, to see their wants with her own eyes, and with her own hands to bring such succour as she could. Hence Bhagoo's hut, being the nearest, was the first to be visited by her. Now, Bhagoo and his neighbours living on the skirts, not in the centre, of the districts which had been visited by the famine, were by no means in the worst plight. To see the real work of the famine, the lady should have gone some miles further on, to places where the people, driven from their homes by want and sickness, were wandering in gangs about the country, seeking employment, or making for the Government relief works, where the able-bodied among them would be set to construct roads never thereafter to be used, and be paid for their labour one pound of grain and fourpence halfpenny for a day's work of twelve hours. There the lady should have gone amongst those who were not able-bodied—the sick, the old, the decrepit, and the infants, dependent on the strong

labourer, and subsisting, God help them, on what he saved out of his pound of grain and his fourpence halfpenny.

But as yet she knew not of them, so she went first to Bhagoo's hut. Bhagoo and his family, as compared with some others, were much to be envied. True, the women had been compelled to part with their few remaining ornaments; and articles of luxury such as grace every cottage in England, never had existed for Bhagoo and his kind. But there were still the cooking-pots, the roll of bedding, the two oxen, and the plough; moreover, the propinquity of a crowded sanitarium on the hill enabled most of the members of the family to earn each as much as sevenpence halfpenny, almost daily, for nearly three months in the year, by carrying loads seven miles up the hill. The lady, however, did not consider these signs and sources of wealth; she only observed that the approaches to Bhagoo's tenement, foul to the sight and noisome to the smell, argued a neglect, on the part of that gentleman, of the first principles of sanitation, if not of the ordinary requirements of decency.

Then the lady entered. The men folk were absent at their work; but the hut was crowded with women, vociferating together at the highest pitch of their voices. Through and around them ran, played, shouted, yelped, and cried, numbers of naked children and mangy dogs. The lady, approaching to see what it was that made them so noisy and eager, found it was nothing more nor less than the confinement of Mrs. Dhondoo. The poor woman was standing; for to sit, much less to lie, is not allowed at such times to ladies of her persuasion. She was supported by a friend at each side, in the midst of the noisy unsavoury mob that thronged the stifling hut, while her head drooped heavily forward, and an occasional groan testified to the efficacy of the ancient curse. The lady's eyes, dazzled by the glare of the sun outside, could at first distinguish nothing plainly in that darksome den. So soon, however, as she understood what was going on, she endeavoured to persuade the crowd to leave the hut, or at any rate to allow the air, such as it was, to reach the patient, to silence the children, or at least turn out the dogs. But it was all in vain; and she then first realised the difficulty, which had not occurred to her before starting on her errand, of communicating her ideas to people whose language she did not know. At last she left the hut and hurried home to prepare and bring back a supply of those delicacies which she would have taken to any poor woman in the like predicament in England. Accordingly she put together two jars of broth and beef tea, a bottle of port wine, some tea, and two of her English blankets, and, summoning a servant to carry them, started again on her mission. On her second entry into the hut, she succeeded better in ingratiating herself with the inmates, now reduced to the mother, infant, and old widow. They of course knew no more of her language than before; but they understood her cheerful smile and kindly manner, and accepted her presents with some pleasure and much wonder. After initiating them into the mysteries of making tea—not

without a shudder as she thought of the flavour of warm pennies that their brass and copper vessels would impart to her orange pekoe—the lady rejoined her man-servant. This worthy, as a pious Mahomedan and a Government official in receipt of eighteen shillings a month, was naturally cross and irritated at being taken from his ordinary duty of dozing in his master's verandah to bear a great bundle up a steep hill to the hut of a filthy idolater. He dared not make any objection; but he published abroad in the neighbourhood that Bhagoo and his relatives had partaken of food prepared by a Christian from the flesh of the sacred cow, and had drunk of the intoxicating drinks of the white man. The needy Brahmin priests eagerly caught at such a chance. At their instigation Bhagoo's fellow caste-men called a meeting to inquire into the matter, and, finding the charges substantially true, sentenced every member of his family to excommunication. To escape this ban he must pay a fine of six pounds, some of which will be expended in a feast to his caste-fellows, and the remaining portion be distributed among the priests. Again he had recourse to the money-lenders; but times were bad, money was tight, and his own credit much impaired. The usurers refused to advance him another sixpence. Obviously the first thing now to be done was to beat his sister-in-law and mother for having got him into the scrape. Next he appropriated the English blankets, and, flinging his old one at Mrs. Dhondoo's head, with the intimation that it was quite good enough for her, went off with the two Witneys to look after Narayen's cows.

Meantime, the lady, on attempting another visit, met with a repulse that puzzled her. The door was fastened on the inside; but no answer could she obtain to her knocks and calls. On her husband's return, she confided to him what she had done. He guessed the reason of her rebuff, but not the disastrous results to Bhagoo of her former visits. He accordingly explained to her the nature of the great gulf fixed between her and Mrs. Dhondoo. The lady felt that so long as Bhagoo was bound by the chain of caste prejudices, forged by ignorance and superstition, and fastened by oppression and greed, it would be useless for her to attempt to treat him as she would her father's tenants. She therefore discontinued her visits, and thus, unconscious of the mischief which she had done him, left him without the means to reinstate himself among his fellows.

III.

Bhagoo, meanwhile, squatted on his new blankets, beneath the shade of a tiny shed made of sticks and palm leaves, by the side of a muddy pool in which Narayen's buffaloes wallowed, sulkily pondered how to raise six pounds. The idea of asking the lady to help him was at once rejected for fear worse results might ensue from further intercourse with her. While he was still cudgelling his slow brains for a way out of his difficulty, a merry shout made him look up. There was his employer's little son, Gunput, running towards him. As an only child, the

fruit of a second marriage contracted very late in life, the boy was naturally the darling of his old father. Moreover, he was a person of great importance in the family ; for there was no other male relative who, at Narayen's death, could perform the funeral obsequies necessary to save his soul from hell. Therefore, though only ten years old at the time of which we speak, the boy was allowed his own way in all things. A frequent fancy of the child's was to escape from the women ordinarily in charge of him, and go off to Bhagoo among the cows ; for Bhagoo knew where to find the ripe blue berries of the thorny karunja bushes, and could weave rings of grass, and make whistles of wild gourds, and do many other delightful things. This was the little fellow that came dancing out of the sunlight into Bhagoo's tabernacle of boughs, and threw himself down on the soft blankets with a cry of childish joy. His father's fondness for him was evidenced even by the rich clothes and costly ornaments he wore ; but chief among the latter was a gold collar, from which hung a charm to avert the evil eye. He was heated and thirsty with his run up the hill, and called immediately for water. Bhagoo accordingly dipped a small brass potful out of the black earthenware jar that stood in the corner. The young Brahmin could not, of course, set his lips to Bhagoo's drinking-vessel ; but, squatting on the ground, he put his hands together against his mouth, and into them Bhagoo poured the water. As the child turned up his head to receive the draught, that amulet, so powerful to turn aside the curse that lurks in the evil eye of the envious, glittered in the sun, and swift as its gleam shot into Bhagoo's mind the thought that there before him, on the person of a helpless babe, was the sum he sorely needed. Scarce knowing what he did, he made a fierce clutch at the child's throat. The startled boy fell back with a loud scream of terror. If that were repeated it might bring assistance ; so he is swiftly stunned to silence by a savage blow with the edge of the brazen vessel, and the cruel grasp is tightened on the tiny throat till the quivering in the little limbs is still. Then Bhagoo rises, and for a moment gazes stupidly at his work. He feels no compunction ; but he is unused to sudden action, and must collect his thoughts a little, for he can scarcely yet realise that it is done.

Presently he wakes to the consciousness of the necessity for concealing the traces of the deed. So he strips the little body of all its finery, fastens a heavy stone to it with the waist-cloth, and throws it into the muddy pool, with a splash that makes the buffaloes open their sleepy eyes with a snort of wonder. Then Bhagoo returned to his shed, buried the child's clothes and ornaments, and, spreading his blankets over the place, once more sat down to reflect on his future action. To avert suspicion he must not dispose of his newly-acquired wealth in the neighbourhood, nor must he leave the place too suddenly. He therefore, as usual, stabled the cattle at nightfall ; next morning drove them afield, and again seated himself over his hidden treasure.

He had not been there long before messengers arrived to seek tidings

of the missing child, who had been last seen on the path that led up the hill. To them he stated that the boy had been with him on the previous afternoon, but had left before evening. Great was the distress in Narayen's household as it hourly became more clear that little Gunput must indeed be lost. The distracted father at last bethought him of invoking the aid of Akbar the son of Ali, the Fouzdar, or chief native police officer of the place, who enjoyed a reputation for almost preternatural sagacity among his neighbours. On hearing the old man's story, Akbar started, with Narayen and some of his servants, for Bhagoo's shed. Him they found adhering to his statement that the child had left him about four o'clock on the previous afternoon, but he did not see which direction the boy had taken.

"Alas!" cried the old father, "some beast has caught him in the jungle, and I shall never see him again; and the ornaments were worth eight pounds."

"What know I?" replied Bhagoo. "Panthers there are about the hill, and they come up from the jungle below for water when the days are dry."

"Panthers do not eat bracelets of gold and silver," retorted the Fouzdar; "at least we might find the ornaments, if we could but learn in which direction the child went."

As he spoke, his quick eye detected the English blankets, strange things to be in the possession of Bhagoo. They were not, of course, connected with the matter now in hand; still, if he could not find the boy and the ornaments, Akbar might at any rate detect a theft of blankets, and so continue to deserve the good opinion of his superiors for activity and intelligence.

"Whence got you these blankets?" he asked.

"The great lady gave them to me," replied Bhagoo.

"What for?"

"God knows what for. It was her pleasure."

"Humph!" grunted the officer suspiciously, stooping to pick up the uppermost blanket and examine it more closely. "Why, there is a great spot of blood on this one!" he exclaimed.

Bhagoo explained that he had hurt his bare foot in the jungle, and so stained his blanket. The explanation did not seem altogether satisfactory to the Fouzdar, for this blood was fresh, and there was no sign of a recent wound on Bhagoo's foot. However, he said nothing, but stooped to pick up the second blanket, in spite of the unconcealed impatience of Narayen. But Akbar suspected the blankets to have been stolen from "the great lady," and her husband was his own chief superior, the fountain of all praise, promotion, and reward, so he took up the other blanket.

"What do you keep here?" he asked of Bhagoo, noticing the newly-dug earth beneath it.

"I keep nothing," answered Bhagoo, with an uneasy laugh. "What have I to keep?"

But ere the answer was finished, the Fouzdar's sword was out of its sheath, probing the *cache*, and in a few seconds all Bhagoo's ill-gotten treasure was exposed to view. Old Narayen said nothing; but with trembling hands collected the ornaments, tied them in a bundle in the little coat, and then stood, glancing with a look of excited but helpless distraction from Akbar to Bhagoo.

"Where have you put the child?" demanded the former, turning fiercely on the latter.

Stupefied by the quickness with which detection had followed the crime, and startled by the suddenness of the question, Bhagoo could only reply, "In the water," pointing, as he spoke, in the direction of the pool behind the hut. Instantly two of Narayen's servants leaped in, soon discovered that of which they had been so long in anxious search, and laid it on the bank. The old father, with a terrible cry, fell senseless by the body of his son. Akbar left him to the care of his servants, and marched Bhagoo off to the magistrate, first leaving instructions for the holding of an inquest.

Before the magistrate Bhagoo made a full and true confession, and was formally committed for trial before the Sessions Court. As this would not sit for another month Bhagoo was securely lodged in gaol, and in the interval his brothers exerted themselves to obtain him professional assistance. The Blue Jay declined the case except on prepayment of a fee beyond their means; but in consideration of a present payment of ten shillings, raised by sale of all the bedding and the remaining brass vessels of the house, he held a long consultation with the brothers, who immediately afterwards departed to a conference with Bhagoo in prison; for in such a case as this it was necessary that the client should have his instructions from the lawyer, as well as the lawyer his from the client.

In accordance with these instructions, Bhagoo, in the Sessions Court, boldly pleaded "Not guilty," and withdrew his confession, which he said had been extorted from him by the threats and ill-usage of the police. The ingenious story which he now urged was that the child had been killed by one of the buffaloes, but Bhagoo, terrified for the consequences to himself for having allowed his employer's son to be killed by the cattle under his charge, determined to conceal the corpse. In doing so, he had yielded to the temptation of stealing the valuables on it; but the police had magnified the charge to one of murder, and to sustain it had extorted a confession from him by torture. The judge, disbelieving Bhagoo's second version of the affair, sentenced him to death; but this sentence required the sanction of the High Court. Bhagoo was, therefore, sent back to prison. Upon a revision of the proceedings, their lordships were of opinion that the finding and sentence were right, and directed that Bhagoo should be hanged. One more chance still remained. In consideration of a present payment of one pound and a bond for ten more, payable in the event of success, the Blue Jay undertook to prepare and present to the Governor a petition praying for

the remission of the capital sentence. With some difficulty the one pound was obtained by mortgage of the plough, and the petition was despatched to the proper quarter.

The Governor, fortunately for Bhagoo, was inclined to take a lenient view of the case on the ground that the evidence against him was purely circumstantial, apart from the confession, which might have been extorted; and, remarking that the petitioner had already suffered an imprisonment sufficient for the theft, directed that a free pardon should be granted to him.

Thus Bhagoo, with his cervical vertebræ still intact, returned to the home of his fathers to find it dismantled, and the inmates reduced to the last extremity of penury. Nor was this the worst. He soon found that his old employer still persisted in regarding him as the murderer of his son, notwithstanding the "Lord Sahib's" opinion to the contrary, and was devising measures to enjoy at least a partial revenge by buying up all his mortgages, notes, and acceptances, with the amiable intention of suing him on them one by one, and causing him to be imprisoned under the decrees which he had no means to satisfy. Bhagoo, accordingly, fled to the capital, hoping thus to elude the pursuit of the avenger. Here he succeeded in obtaining employment as one of the cowherds of Rama the milkman, some of whose buffaloes he is now driving to their stable; and thus it is that we enjoy the privilege of making his acquaintance. By the roadside is a huge old fig-tree, the trunk of which has been barbarously adorned with red paint and gold paper by some pious hand. As he passes this, Bhagoo reverently folds his hands together and bows his head towards it in silent adoration. A little further on he meets a small boy. Luckily perhaps, for himself, the urchin has on no ornaments. He picks the boy up, and from the recesses of his waistcloth produces a stick of sugar-cane from which he tears a portion with his teeth, and, after stripping the rind from this with the same weapons, he puts the succulent morsel into the child's mouth, and sets him gently on the ground.

Ere long, however, Bhagoo will turn those same teeth of his to another use, for which the world will at last rid itself of him. Soon after his arrival in the city, he chanced to meet Succoo, whom he remembered as the wife of a former acquaintance, Itoo, the son of Gunnoo, the cart-driver. She informed him that her husband had died, and she was maintaining herself by working at a cotton-spinning mill. The fact was that she did earn threepence a day by cleaning cotton from five in the morning till five in the evening. This income she was in the habit of eking out by practices not uncommon with women of her class and in her circumstances. Therefore, when Bhagoo, pleased to encounter a familiar face in this wilderness of strangers, proposed to her that they should set up a joint establishment, she acceded at once without any affectation of coyness. Indeed, Bhagoo and his kind would be genuinely astonished if you were to hint that there was anything disreputable in

such a connection. Hence it is that, at the time of our making Bhagoo's acquaintance, he and Succoo are living together, as man and wife, in one of a row of rooms, which the proprietor lets out to people of their class for half-a-crown a month. This evening Bhagoo will return late, tired and out of temper, from his long day's work. Unfortunately, Succoo will be late too, and there will be no meal ready for him. His angry words will be followed by recriminations from her. At last the enraged Bhagoo will spring at her like a wild animal. After a short, fierce, but unequal struggle, the woman will fall, streaming with blood, Bhagoo on the top of her, biting, tearing, and striking like an angry beast. The sudden death-like silence that succeeds will alarm the neighbours more than the clamour, for such sounds are too common here. Presently, one or two will pluck up courage sufficient to fetch a policeman; and then the woman will be found lying without her nose upon the bare floor, dying from the effects of savage blows on her head and body, while Bhagoo, red-eyed and sullen, sits panting by with the marks of the conflict fresh upon him. Again will he be tried for his life, but this time with a different result, and within a week will be led forth to what the newspapers will call his "righteous doom."

It has no terror for him, nor allurements. He stolidly acquiesces in it because he is powerless, and knows his time has come. As he stands white-capped and pinioned, silent and alone, in the bright glare of the eastern sun, above the surging multitudes assembled to enjoy the holiday spectacle of his death, he feels no fear of the future, nor regret for the past. Only something in the warm light around him, contrasted with the gloom of the prison he has left, reminds him of a hut upon the sunny mountain side where his brothers work and his children play. And with the half-formed thought arises a kind of stupid wonder whether the "Lord Sahib" will stand his friend again. But, ere the slow recollection and dull wonder can form themselves into so much as a wish, a bolt is quickly drawn, the rope tightens, the white cap fills with the swollen features it conceals, and all that is left of Bhagoo is that motionless, senseless thing slowly twirling at the end of the slender line that twists and untwists itself above our heads.

Reader, what think you of Bhagoo? I have tried to show him to you as I know him, nothing extenuating, nor setting down aught in malice. True, his faults are those of the beasts. But who is to blame that there is so much of the beast in him? Bred as he has been to a life of drudgery, amid filth, want, and wretchedness, with no pleasures save those of the appetites, and no instruction save that of the grossest superstition, what wonder that he is callous, sensual, and rapacious? The wonder is that he has a virtue left; yet virtues he has, and these the virtues of a man—and man, we know, is made in the image of GOD. He is brave in danger, uncomplaining in pain, sickness, and want, and loyal to his own kin, working hard, steadily, and soberly, to scrape together the barest subsistence for himself and them. He cannot count

beyond five, but he can make and keep in repair his house and most of his implements. He knows every beast, bird, and plant in the jungle round his home, has names for them all, and can tell you the habits and qualities of every one. He will cure you the sting of a scorpion, or relieve the pain of a snake-bite, as well as any physician from London or Edinburgh, though by far other means. Evidently, he has a great capacity for noticing, learning, and remembering. And how do we make use of this capacity so as best to foster these virtues and correct those vices? By a rigorous taxation we help him to accumulate those debts which, by reason of his improvidence and ignorance, he is too ready to incur. But we do little towards making him more provident or less ignorant; and when he shows the brute side of a nature we have helped to brutalise, we hang him up between earth and heaven, and hold forth about his "righteous doom," and vapour of how we "hold the land in trust for the natives."

Who were the Fairies?

THIS curious stone weapon which I am holding in my hand, as I sit on the old wooden bench beside the glen, though rude enough as to form and workmanship, has a strange and eventful history of its own. In shape it resembles an arrowhead, and as an arrowhead it was fashioned by the ancient people who first made use of it. But I have just bought it for sixpence—a cheap price as neolithic markets go—from the old ploughman yonder, who brought it up for my inspection this morning, as an elf-dart. And an elf-dart it really is, chipped and ground from a carnelian pebble by the elves or fairies who once lived over all Britain, and of whom so many wonderful tales still survive in our midst. For if we may believe a most enticing theory of modern science, the elves are a real historical race, and the stories about them even now contain a kernel of historical truth. Their myth is a long one to unravel; but it sheds so much light upon the origin and nature of many similar myths elsewhere, that it is perhaps worth the trouble of an hour's thought.

We now know that at an early period of the present or recent epoch Northern Europe was inhabited by a race of men who used weapons and tools of polished flint and other hard stones. These men, whom we call by the name of Neolithic, must be carefully distinguished from the far earlier palæolithic savages who lived before the last great glacial period, and who chipped the very rude stone weapons of the drift, besides etching the curious sketches of reindeers and mammoths on horn and ivory, which are found in so many French caves. The palæolithic men belong to a remote antiquity, when the animals which roamed over Europe were of very different types from those which now inhabit it, and when a single race of wholly unvaried savages spread throughout the whole surface of the habitable globe. The rough hatchets which they dropped by the banks of the Ganges hardly differ at all from those which they dropped by the banks of the Somme or the Thames. But the Neolithic men, with whom we have here to deal, were far more advanced in all useful arts, and had progressed a long way on the upward path towards civilisation. They were probably coëval with the earliest Egyptian culture; and so, by comparison with their palæolithic predecessors, they may be considered as almost modern and historical personages. No great gulf separates them from our own times, as the last glaciation of Northern Europe separates the palæolithic savages from them and from us. We still find their sepulchres on the surface of the earth, and the temples or cromlechs which they built are still standing in our midst.

Apparently, they continued to live on, and to use weapons of stone exclusively, as late as some three or four thousand years since.

In stature these Neoliths (for we may as well give them a name) were short and broadly built, as we know from their bones. A man of five feet six was a giant among them, and one of just five feet was not accounted short ; while some of them reached only to four feet ten. A great many indications tend to identify them with that strangely isolated race, the Basques of the Pyrenees ; and, if this identification be correct, I may add that they were swarthy people, with dark hair and beady black eyes. It is not unlikely that the small, dark, stumpy little Etruscans belonged to the same stock.

Most of our knowledge of the Neoliths is derived from the study of their tombs or barrows, of which a large number may still be found, capping the green summits of our downs, or standing out boldly on the sky-line of our upland plains. This particular elf-bolt on which I am now discoursing came from the cutting where the new road passes through the great oval tumulus on the edge yonder, known as Barrow Hill. Each such tumulus is the burial-place of some Neolithic chieftain, and it casts much light on the life and mode of thought of the people who built it. The barrows in question consist, as a rule, of a long mound or heap of earth, covering and enclosing a chambered tomb. They were constructed by building first a hut of huge unwrought stones, set on edge, and then placing other large slabs across them on top. Into the house thus formed, which probably represented the home of the dead chieftain during life, they laid the body for burial, in a crouching posture, as they usually slept. Then they built up a long entrance or passage, and covered the whole with a great mound of loose earth. Sometimes they put a few large stones on top to mark the place, and surrounded the whole mound with a wall and a ring of rude obelisks, as many in number as the enemies whom the dead chieftain had slain. Kit's Coty House in Kent is such a Neolithic tomb, uncovered and exposed to view by the removal of the earth which once formed the mound. On the Wiltshire and Gloucestershire downs, many others remain as yet intact ; and they have only lately been opened by modern antiquarian research.*

Mr. Herbert Spencer's luminous investigations into primitive ideas help us to understand these arrangements. They all depend upon the belief in the continued existence of the dead man or his ghost. "The tomb," says Prof. Boyd Dawkins, "was to the Neolithic mind as truly the habitation of the spirits of the dead as the hut was that of the living. It was the home of the dead chieftain, and the centre into which the members of the family or clan were gradually gathered, and where they led

* I owe many of my facts to Professor Boyd Dawkins's interesting work on *Early Men in Britain*, though of course he must not be held responsible for any of the deductions which I draw from them.

a joyous and happy life, similar to that which they enjoyed on the earth." Hence, when the Neolithic chieftain died, he was buried with all his belongings. His arrowheads, his stone hatchets, and his cups or bowls of rude pottery were laid by his side, for use in the world of spirits; and there we still find them when we open the barrows at the present day. His amber necklet and gold trinkets were placed on his corpse. Moreover, at his funeral many of his wives and slaves were put to death, as they still are in Dahomey and in the South Sea Islands, in order that their ghosts might accompany him to the spirit world, and wait upon him as they had done on earth. Their cleft skulls may yet be found beside the unhurt skeleton of the dead chief. Wild boar, deer, pigs, and oxen were also eaten at the funeral feast, and their bones were placed in the tomb for a like purpose, that the ghost might hunt their ghosts in the other world. Thus the chief continued to live on in his grave as he had lived before, surrounded by all the objects which he needed, and sometimes stalking abroad at night to visit his friends in dreams, or by day to aid them in battle against their enemies.

Nor was this all. In order to propitiate the ghost or to obtain its assistance in time of war, offerings were constantly made at the tomb. The slabs in the stone chambers have little cups or hollows on their upper surface, intended to hold presents of meat and drink for the spirit within. Such offerings to the dead are common at the present day amongst all savage tribes, and the idea which dictates them is exactly the same as in Neolithic times. We shall see hereafter that gifts are still offered in Europe at the present day on the tombs of these very same Neolithic chieftains.

So far we seem to have done very little towards identifying the elves or fairies with the Neolithic ghosts. But we can easily see the beginning of the transforming process when we remember that Europe was overrun some four thousand years since by a new and intrusive race, the Aryan Celts. These Celts seem at first to have been themselves armed with stone weapons, but at a very early date they learnt to manufacture weapons of bronze. In Britain at least, and probably elsewhere, the Celts are distinguished from the earlier non-Aryan race as a bronze-using from a stone-using people. Now, we know from their remains that the primitive Celts were a tall and muscular set of men, very different in stature and appearance from the small Neoliths, into whose country they came. There was a constant warfare between the two races, and slowly the Celts spread over the whole of Western Europe, either as colonists or else as a ruling caste settled down amongst the small and swarthy Iberians. But the Celts did not destroy the tombs of the elder chieftains, though these are different in shape from their own barrows. They would have been afraid to do so, for fear of bringing upon themselves the wrath of the ghost. Indeed, superstitious and ignorant people everywhere are very chary of moving or desecrating a tumulus; and so recently as 1859, a farmer in the Isle of Man offered a heifer as a burnt-

offering at a barrow near Tynwald Hill, which had been lately opened by Messrs. Oliver and Oswald, in order to avert the anger of its occupant at this desecration. In this way, and owing to these feelings, the tombs of the Neolithic age have been generally preserved as objects of superstitious dread for so many centuries throughout all Western Europe.

And now comes in the genesis of the myth. As the ghosts which haunted these early tombs were small and swarthy, they came to be thought of as a little people who dwelt underground, and there wrought curious utensils of stone and amber, or guarded hidden treasures, such as we know are sometimes found in the barrows. And as the tendency is for myths always to exaggerate, so that tall races grow into giants and small races grow into dwarfs, the inhabitants of the Neolithic tumuli grew to be regarded as a very tiny set of spirits indeed. Moreover, as ghosts of a hostile though conquered race, they were dreaded rather than revered, and they became objects of a curious but not very intense fear. Their small size, indeed, and the tradition of their helplessness—for the Iberians were but a feeble folk, ill protected by their stone hatchets from the bronze battle-axes of the sturdy Celt—prevented the legend from representing them as really formidable; but they were regarded as at the root of all petty mischief whatsoever. It was they who curdled the milk, who dried up the teats of the cows, or who led men astray at nights. They were a jealous little people, too, who bore ill-will towards any man that spoke badly of them, and who resented any slight to their dignity with marked ill-temper. They made the children sick, and they plagued the cattle with murrains. They spoilt the water in the wells, and they burnt up the corn in the fields. In short, they did all the harm that hostile ghosts could do, considering their small stature and their consequently slight power of doing active injury. Hence they were propitiated as far as possible by the Celts, and by the later races, such as the English, who learnt the Celtic superstitions from their Welsh slaves.

To these small underground spirits the names of elves and fairies came to be applied. The first is the true Teutonic word; the second is a Latin form, used by the Romanised Celtic races to translate some native word. It is derived from the Latin *Fata*, or, as some will have it, from *Fatue*.* The Provençal form is *Fada*, and the French is *Fée*. The real Norman-English equivalent is *Fay*; but we now more generally use the word *Fairy*, which is of course originally a collective form, meaning the kingdom or tribe of *Fays*. All these Romance words, however, have really nothing to do with the origin of the myth, because they are mere late translations, adopted by the Celts of Gaul and Spain as the nearest Latin equivalents for a native word, when they lost their own languages.

* This latter derivation is apparently accepted by most folk-lorists; but I confess its philological correctness looks doubtful. According to all analogy, *fée* points back to *fata*, not to *fatua*.

The one important fact to note is this, that these names cluster most thickly about the Neolithic tombs and the objects found in them. Many Neolithic interments took place in caves; and such a cave is known in Provençal France by the name of *Trau deis Fadas*, and in French-speaking districts as *Grotte des Fées*. Stone avenues or monoliths of the same age are constantly called *Pierres des Fées*. The great dolmen at Locmariaker (Morbihan) bears in Breton the name of Manné-er-H'roek—which probably gives us the true Celtic word—and in French that of *Montagne de la Fée*. In England and in Sweden similar pillars or cromlechs are known as elf-stones. Country people call flint arrows, such as that which I hold in my hand, by the name of elf-shots, elf-darts, or elf-bolts; and stone hatchets are constantly spoken of as fairy axes. If we put together all these facts, as well as the underground life of the fairies, and the curious objects they are supposed to frame, we can hardly resist the inference that the elves really represent the ghosts in the Neolithic tombs.

"Fairy land," says Mr. Wright, "was generally described as situated under the surface of our earth." One of its entrances was the Peak Cavern of Derbyshire—a known place of interment in the stone age. "The popular belief," Mr. Kemble tells us, "was that buried treasure was guarded by spells, and loaded with a curse which would cling to the discoverer." The significance of these ideas is obvious.

All the petty superstitions connected with stone implements or barrows point in the same direction. For instance, it is well known that the elves make children ill, and this is a common feature of all hostile spirits, the ghosts of actual or historical enemies. Near Linde, in Sweden, is an earth-fast stone or monolith, marking the tomb of a Neolithic chief, and known, as usual, by the name of the elf-stone. On its flat upper surface are six small holes, originally made to receive the offerings to the ghost from his own people. Nowadays, when a child is ill, or, as they say, "elf-struck," the women of the village visit this stone, smear the holes with fat or butter, and place in them, as offerings, small rag dolls. There can be little doubt that these rag dolls are the last vestige of human victims, once sacrificed at the tomb to appease the elves who sent the pestilence. Near Enköping is a similar rock with a cup-shaped hole, known as the Elf-pot. The women of the neighbourhood make a visit to the spot every Thursday, to anoint the elf-pot for the sick, with hog's lard, and to offer in it a pin or some other object of small value. In both these cases we have relics of the propitiation due to a hostile ghost. At Minchin Hampton in Gloucestershire there is an ancient standing-stone or menhir called the Long Stone, which stands on a slight elevation, the remnant, as Dr. Thurnam thinks, of a Neolithic barrow. Near the bottom of this stone is a natural perforation through which, not many years since, children used to be passed for the cure or prevention of measles and whooping-cough. In this instance we have a sort of anticipatory precaution, a nominal devotion of the children to the elves in order to appease their dignity, and so prevent them from sending

diseases. The holed stones of Cornwall are similarly employed, and in India such holed stones are common, and are used in just the same way.

Rude pillars of Neolithic age, with the little cup-shaped hollows mentioned above, occur all over the Continent, from the Pyrenees to Scandinavia, and are known as "fairy-cups," "elf-cups," "*marmites du diable*,"* and "stones of the dead." To the present day, they are often filled with butter or lard by the peasantry. The "foreign stone" at Stonehenge has two such cavities cut in its surface. Occasionally these essentially heathen objects have been Christianised by the addition of an emblem. "In the neighbourhood of Niemeck-in-der-Mark in Prussia," says Mr. Boyd Dawkins, "there is a holed stone bearing the name of Bischofs-stein, and the figure of a cross and of a cup. In no less than twenty-seven churches in Prussia, and two in Sweden, these holes have been made in the walls of churches after they were built. In the town of Griefswald it used formerly to be the practice to get rid of fevers and other maladies by blowing into them. Sometimes they bear marks of having been recently filled with grease." The significance of these facts, when placed beside those already mentioned, can hardly be mistaken; and when we consider the frequency with which Christian churches have been built above previously sacred sites, I cannot resist the suggestion that the holed stones in these churches may really be old Neolithic monuments worked into the walls. In Sweden, according to M. Hildebrand, they are still called elf-stones, and the offerings placed in them are definitely said to be intended for the elves. "The cup-stones," says Mr. Dawkins again, "are still pointed out to the stranger on the moors near Eyam, Derbyshire, and they were used for offerings when the village was desolated by the Plague." Here, as ever, we find the elves regarded as hostile spirits, who send pestilence, but who may be propitiated by offerings, often of a ridiculously slight character.

There is one way, however, of keeping in check not only ghosts and elves, but living men as well. If you possess any object belonging to your enemy, you are able to charm or bewitch him with it; for a portion of his spirit or personality is inherent in it, and by means of this portion you become master of all his actions. Hence a lock of the victim's hair or a paring of his nail is of great use in witchcraft, to give you power over the person bewitched; and some object belonging to the victim, or at least his full and proper name, is absolutely requisite for the success

* In Christian times the devil has inherited proprietary rights in many objects which once belonged to the elves. The Church regarded them as evil spirits, and they are constantly spoken of as fiends or demons. Hence, most names which once contained the title of the elves have been transferred to the devil. This is the origin of many among the Devil's Dykes, Devil's Jumps, and Devil's Punchbowls now scattered over England; though these are doubtless in some cases due to Teutonic gods. "*Dæmones*" is the regular name for the fairies in the ecclesiastical Latin of Anglo-Saxon writers. The "devils" of witchcraft are undoubtedly identical with the elves.

of the wizard. So, too, we Europeans give locks of our hair, and the Chinese give finger-nails, to friends as a pledge or keepsake: and by so doing we put ourselves in their power, and express our perfect confidence in their good-will. Superstitious people burn their nail-parings, lest they should fall into the hands of an enemy. In this way, then, it may be possible to control the elves, by gaining possession of something which once belonged to them: and hence the origin of the superstitious virtues attached to stone weapons throughout Europe. Dr. Mitchell, in his interesting work on *The Past in the Present* gives a graphic account of the honour still paid in Scotland to the flint arrowheads, which are known there, and all over Europe, as elf-bolts, or fairy-shots. They are supposed to protect the person who owns them from disease, from loss of cattle,* and from petty misfortunes: exactly the sort of mischief known to be wrought by the elves. They have been worn as charms in all times, and they sometimes form the central pendant or amulet of the magnificent necklaces found in Etruscan tombs. As the Etruscans were themselves in all probability of Iberian or Euskarian origin—an isolated body of Neolithic people, surrounded by Aryan neighbours—this case may be looked upon as most closely connected with ancestor-worship, the object of the charm being to gain the aid of dead chieftains, rather than merely to avert their anger. To the present day, carnelian necklaces are made by the Bosnian peasants in the shape of these same arrowheads. Fragments chipped from the monoliths of Stonehenge are also believed to possess magical virtues, especially against toads, which are universally recognised as uncanny animals connected with elves, witches, and other powers of evil. Flint-flakes, in like manner, used as knives in Neolithic times, have been employed as amulets by later races. They are constantly buried in tombs of Teutonic date, to protect the ghost against hostile ghosts; and according to M. de Mortillet, they are found in Merovingian graves under circumstances which clearly show them to have been intended as charms. They have also been discovered in Celtic tombs of the Roman age at Weston-super-Mare and in Thanet. Thus the importance of the elf-bolt and the fairy knives is recognised wherever the fairy superstition exists or has existed.

Still more curious are the notions of luck connected with the polished stone hatchets. In England and Scotland these are universally known as thunderbolts; that is to say, bolts or darts of the god Thunor, more familiar to most of us in his Scandinavian dress as Thor. The words Thunor and Thunder are absolutely identical, the name of the god and the thing being the same in Anglo-Saxon.† In Germany and Scandi-

* Perhaps the neolithic serfs, like their modern descendants in Ireland, waged a smouldering warfare by houghing cattle. At any rate, injuries to cows and horses are always attributed to the fairies.

† The intrusive *d* in the modern word comes through the genitive *Thunres* or other oblique cases; and it is thus exactly analogous to *cendre* and *cinder* from *cinerem*, to *gendre* from *generum*, and to the Greek *andros* for *aner* from *anēr*.

navia they are known as Thor's hammers; and there is no doubt that the hammer with which Thor is armed in the myths is derived from the idea suggested by stone hatchets. "Thunor," says an Anglo-Saxon poem, "will thresh them with his fiery axe." The Teutons picked up these polished objects, evidently works of art, but not made by any race with whom they were acquainted; and they came to the natural conclusion that they must be divinely wrought, and must be bolts which the thunder-god hurled down, fiery red, from the angry clouds. Hence, as Dr. Mitchell tells us, such thunderbolts are kept in houses in Scotland to protect them against lightning. If you have in your possession a weapon of the god Thor, you are able to hold him in check, and prevent him from hurting you. It is noticeable that this superstition is most rife in the Scandinavian districts of Caithness, Sutherland, and the Isles, though it has spread thence over the whole of Scotland. But mixed with this late and Teutonic form of belief, there is an earlier and underlying Celtic form. The thunderbolts or stone axes are not only useful against lightning, they are also kept as charms to heal the sick and to avert the evil eye from men and beasts; that is to say, to counteract the bad influence of the fairies. Here we clearly see the older elf theory mingled with the newer Teutonic mythology. Even thunder itself was supposed to be due in part to the elves; for example, Ariel hurled lightning at the ship in the *Tempest*, and their habit of turning milk sour points in the same direction. Dr. Mitchell specially mentions that stone hatchets are supposed to prevent the milk of cows from drying up; and we know that this practice of drying up milk is one of the favourite tricks of the elves.* "In Greece," says Mr. Dawkins, "the smaller ones were used as amulets, and imitations of them were made in sardonyx and carnelian. Some even of the larger ones have been perforated for suspension." A small jade axe found in Egypt has both its faces engraved with Gnostic charms in the debased Greek character current in Alexandria during the third and fourth centuries. I am inclined to think, indeed, that all the mystic virtues attached to jade in early times are really due, not to the material, but to the fact of its being worked up into the best and handsomest Neolithic weapons. The possession of a jade hatchet would thus be peculiarly important, as giving the owner control over an exceptionally great and powerful ghost.

From these causes, and from others which will come to be mentioned hereafter, the character of the fairies gradually improved. From the first, their small size made them comparatively harmless; and, as the possession of an amulet practically turned them from spiteful little enemies into familiars and assistants, it is easy to see how they should

* The hedgehog is specially connected with fairies (as in the *Tempest* and *Midsummer Night's Dream*), and it still has the reputation of sucking cows' milk as they lie on the ground.

at last grow almost beneficent in temper, though remaining to the last mischievous and frolicsome. In country places they were always more or less dreaded, and this dread caused them to be spoken of in euphemistic terms, as the "little people," and the "good people," which latter expression strikingly reminds us of the Latin *manes*, "the kind ones." The euphemism may often have been accepted literally, and so may have helped to gain for the fairies a better character; but two other causes must have largely co-operated in producing this effect. In the first place, the Roman *manes* were certainly ancestral ghosts, the spirits of dead men, openly recognised as such; and when we recollect that many of the Iberians lived on into Celtic and English times—for the dark-haired people of Wales and Ireland, as well as of many country districts in England, retain unmistakable evidence of mixed Iberian blood—it seems not unlikely that, in the mouths of one section of the community at least, the term "good folks" might really mean what it says—helpful ancestral spirits: the lower and enslaved classes might look upon the fairies to some extent as friendly ghosts, while their masters looked upon them as spiteful, though impotent, enemies. We know that witchcraft, which is closely connected with the elf superstition, has always been practised by the very lowest class, and in the Anglo-Saxon laws it is generally mentioned as a crime peculiar to serfs. In the second place, the possession of some object which had once belonged to the elves was so common that many persons must have had the elves in their power, and so regarded them in the light of mere auxiliaries or familiar spirits. In most fairy tales the presence of the fairy is secured by rubbing a charm—a ring or amulet: the former being, perhaps, one of the stone spindle-whorls still so much revered in Scotland. In this way the fairies come to be almost friendly, and are so thought of in our nursery stories. Nevertheless, to the last, the spiteful element remains. The fairy who is slighted by not being invited to a birth, at which her presence was indispensable, always revenges herself in some way or other; and even the fairy godmother, the elf who *was* present at the birth, and who is rendered friendly by the possession of some charm—as in *Cinderella*—yet often uses her power to do some piece of ill-will to the enemies of her *protégé*. Shakspeare's fairies, who fairly represent the ordinary English tradition, are always mischievous, and sometimes ill-natured. Ariel is a docile slave to Prospero; but he causes the shipwreck, and he plagues Caliban with pains and pinches; he misleads the drunken conspirators into the morass, and snatches away the tables in the form of a harpy. The pretended fairies in the *Merry Wives of Windsor* pinch Falstaff black and blue. Puck, "that shrewd and knavish sprite," is said to—

Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless makes the breathless housewife churn,
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm,
Mislead night wanderers, laughing at their harm.

Queen Mab

Plats the manes of horses in the night,
And bakes the elf-locks in foul, sluttish hairs,
Which, once untangled, much misfortune bodes.

Indeed, all the fairy passages in Shakspeare are worth reading in this connection, both for their obvious traces of mischief and for the relation of the fairies to childbirth.

It has been objected, however, that the fairies are often represented as workers in metal. This is perfectly true; but I think it does not really tell against the view I have been trying to enforce. The evolution of the elf superstition is rather complex, and some light is thrown upon its later stages by these very traditions of metallurgy. The fact is, there are a great many orders of spirits, representing many separate layers or strata of ghosts, hostile or friendly, all mixed up together in later times under the single designation of fairies. Under the influence of courtly Norman literature, this one Romance word has all but completely blotted out the memory of our earlier native English elves, and of the still more primitive Celtic legends; the Derbyshire pixies, the Teutonic water-nixes, the wierds and fiends and monsters of Scandinavian belief, have all merged in modern England into the one absorbing myth of the fairies. Now, it is quite possible to show that there has been an historical mixture of this sort. Thus, the legend of Wayland Smith is one which occurs all over Teutonic and Scandinavian Europe, and which is demonstrably earlier in origin than the English colonisation of Britain. But in England it is localised at Wayland Smith's Cave on the Berkshire Hills; and this so-called cave is really a Neolithic chambered tomb. The fact is, the English when they came to Britain were already in the habit of worshipping at tumuli and standing stones, which marked the graves of their own chieftains. Probably they had largely forgotten the original reason of such worship, and had come to look upon all barrows and monoliths as in themselves sacred objects, the dwelling-place of gods or demigods. The Welsh, whom they conquered and enslaved, also revered such mounds and stone circles, some of them being the tombs of Celtic chiefs, and containing bronze, iron, and gold objects, while others were those of their Neolithic predecessors, and contained only objects of polished stone—jade, jasper, amber—and more rarely, perhaps, gold. The English readily adopted all these holy spots, and we know that many Anglo-Saxon sacred sites were identical with those of the conquered Britons. The surviving British slaves, half-Christianised or wholly heathen as they were, would continue to worship at these sites; and fresh interments of Anglo-Saxons would give them renewed sanctity in the eyes of the conquerors. Nay, it is certain that many tumuli actually contain interments of all three ages, thus showing that the sacred places continued sacred, without intermission, from one age to another. Indeed, most of the moots of English hundreds, as Mr. Gomme has recently shown, were held at sacred trees or standing stones of Celtic

or pre-Celtic date; and the hundred court of the hundred of Stone assembled to this day at a Neolithic tomb, the proceedings being opened by pouring a bottle of port wine over the monolith, which is a survival of the primitive sacrifice to our own times. Such an unwrought stone was worshipped at Hyettos, representing Heracles "after the ancient manner," and thirty similar stones were revered by the Pharaeans. Theophrastus describes "the superstitious man" as taking out his phial to pour oil on the anointed stones in the street, while many such stones are still covered with grease by the peasantry in Ireland in our own times.

Another example of the tenacity of such primitive traditions is given by Mr. Boyd Dawkins. He tells us that a certain cairn near Mold, in North Wales, known as Bryn-yr-Ellyllon, the goblin or fairy hill, was supposed to be haunted, and a spectre was said to have been seen entering the cairn clad in golden armour. This story was of course a survival of the notion that the cairn was the home of the dead chieftain, from which his ghost issued from time to time into the upper world. But in 1832 the cairn was opened, and there, sure enough, beneath 300 cartloads of stones, the explorers came upon a skeleton wearing a beautiful gold corselet of Etruscan workmanship. The tomb was of the Iron Age, and the tradition of this golden-armoured ghost must have been handed down in the neighbourhood from the date of its erection to the present century.

Thus we can easily see how, especially after the introduction of Christianity, the distinction between Neolithic, Celtic, and Anglo-Saxon tombs might readily die out; the more so as relics of the Neolithic and Celtic population lived on under all changes of dynasty in our island. The Church regarded honours paid to all alike as "heathendom," and the Anglo-Saxon laws severely condemn worship offered to stones, or tombs, or dead men.* But the popular belief continued unaffected, and the frequent repetition of these laws shows that the respect paid to the elves was in no way diminished. Our ancestors, however, were not likely to make those minute distinctions between long barrows and round barrows, between Euskarian, Celtic, and Teutonic graves, which are made by modern antiquaries. Accordingly, all early monuments alike came to be spoken of as elfin stones; and one such stone in Scotland has given its name to a place, and through the place to the family of Elphinstone. So the elves grew in the popular imagination into little underground beings, who wrought weapons and ornaments of stone, amber, bronze, iron, or gold, and who came out to dance at night only. Any little object found underground was at once attributed to their handicraft; and even some very small tobacco pipes of the seven-

* "Quicunque grana combusserit in loco ubi mortuus est homo," &c. (Archbishop Ecgberht's *Confessionale*). "Heathenship is that man worship stones, or any kind of tree" (Cnut's Laws). Eadgar's Laws forbid "man-worshipping, and tree-worshipping, and stone-worshipping, and that devil's craft whereby children are drawn through the earth." Many other instances might be quoted, if necessary.

teenth century, once manufactured at Amesbury, and now often dug up in gardens or ploughed out in fields, are known to labourers by the name of fairy pipes. "The fairy origin of such pipes," says Mr. Stevens, "was a popular belief in England, Scotland, and Ireland."

Among the monuments thus associated with the fairies we must rank the great stone circles of Stonehenge, Avebury, and other places, whose real date is still undecided. These, as well as the monoliths, were elfin stones. Hence arose a connection between fairies and circles—a connection shown in the still surviving idea that fairies always dance in a ring. Nor must we forget that dancing has a sacred meaning amongst most savage or barbarous races, and that these sacred dances are often circular. There is even some reason to believe that dancing may have formed part of the religious services at Stonehenge and the other megalithic circles; for one Welsh name of the old monument is "the great choir of Britain," and the Celtic word translated choir is from the same root as the Latin (or rather Greek) *chorus*, which of course implies the notion of dancing. Geoffrey of Monmouth, too, calls it the Giant's Dance; and though he is a worthless authority as to facts, being, indeed, a most unscrupulous romancer, he may at least be quoted in evidence as to a popular belief in the connection of dancing with Stonehenge. Moreover, around the stone circles there is often a circular mound or earthwork; and these mounds, being associated by tradition with the elves, would naturally suggest the notion that the so-called fairy rings—plots of green grass, growing on ground manured by concentric layers of decaying fungi—were caused by the fairies in their dances. As the vast majority of barrows in Britain are round, not long or oval, the circular shape would be firmly connected with the elf superstition in the minds of men. The "disk-shaped barrows" of Dr. Thurnam would especially strengthen this connection between rings on the grass and tumuli, because they consist of round rims exactly like a "fairy ring," slightly raised above the surrounding level. Thus would arise the notion of the fairies coming out by night to dance in circles, hand-in-hand with one another, which forms perhaps the most permanent and prominent portion of the popular belief or tradition. Even the huts of the prehistoric age were circular, and the stone circles are probably merely huge huts for the dead chieftains.

It is a significant fact that the belief in fairies is most rife in the most thoroughly Celtic portions of our islands—Wales, Devon and Cornwall, Derbyshire, the Highlands of Scotland, and Ireland. These are also the parts where the Euskarian or Iberian population has most largely survived; and it is in these districts that the fairies most retain their primitive characteristic as mischievous people, injuring cattle and causing sickness among children. Here, too, the use of fairy charms to counteract such mischief, the hoarding of elfin, shots and thunderbolts, and the employment of euphemistic or conciliatory language about the "good people," is general. In Teutonic England, on the other hand, the fairies have dwindled into mere pretty poetic fancies enshrined in child-

ren's tales, and made beautiful by the genius of Shakspeare; their mischief has become mere playful trickiness. Yet even in Teutonic England, especially in early times, many traces of fairy worship and propitiation still lingered on, in which it is difficult to disentangle the element of ancestor-worship from the element of propitiatory sacrifices to hostile ghosts. There was an early English family of *Ælfings*, or descendants of the elves; and they have left their traces at Alþington in Devon, Alvington in Gloucester, Somerset, and Devon, and Alvingham in Lincoln. But all these counties are noticeable for the large proportion of Euskarian blood which they still retain; and so these sons of the elves may really be Anglicised clans of primitive elfish descent. The word *ælf*, an elf, occurs constantly in Anglo-Saxon names; and it may have reference either to the ancestral spirits, or to the notion that the fairies must be propitiated by being invited to the birth of a child. Thus we have the name *Ælf-gifu* (usually modernised into *Elgiva*), meaning "the gift of the elves," just as *Godgifu* (similarly tortured into *Godiva*) means "the gift of God." *Alfred*, originally *Ælf-red*, means "the rede (or counsel) of the elves." *Ælfric* is elf-rich; and *Ælfstan*, a very significant name, is the elf-stone. *Ælfgar*, *Ælfheah* (St. *Alphege*), *Ælfhere*, *Ælfmær*, *Ælfnoth*, *Ælfsige*, *Ælfweard*, and *Ælfwine* are formed in the same manner; the last three mean respectively, elf victory, elf protection, and friend of the elves—all of them names pregnant with meaning. We see their full significance when we put them side by side with other names compounded with *stan*, a stone, such as *Æthelstan*, noble stone; *Wulfstan*, wolf stone; *Dunstan*, Ealhstan, and *Friðestan*. All show the long survival of the ancient elf and stone worship, whose relics are to be found in our midst to the present day. In the Isle of Skye, monoliths exist in almost every parish, and libations of milk are still poured out upon them, doubtless to prevent the drying up of the cows' udders; and in Ireland, to a very late period, the fairies were formally invited on the occasion of a birth, lest they might injure the child through spite at the neglect shown to their dignity by not informing them of the event.

On the other hand, it is worth notice that mention is made in Anglo-Saxon works of hostile spirits which harm men and beasts, though, of course, not under the heathen name of elves: "The neat they sting as it wends through the field; the kine they destroy; the horse they bow, they hew him with horns." And we have an Anglo-Saxon spell which directs that, if witchcraft has spoilt a farm, the farmer should build an altar, lay on it *milk from each cow*, and a leaf from each herb, sprinkle the whole with holy water, and pronounce a Christian form of prayer. Here, surely, we may see Christianity used as a defence against the power of the elves.

In this brief sketch I have only endeavoured to trace out what seem to me the main features of the fairy superstition in Western Europe, and its probable origin. I do not mean to suggest that this is

the genesis of all fairy-like spirits everywhere—say in South Africa, or in New Zealand. It is possible that other races may have very similar superstitions in which the subterranean beings are more decidedly ancestral, and in which the hostile or mischievous element is comparatively wanting. It is also possible, or, to speak more correctly, it is highly probable, that many elements of ancestor-worship are now inextricably mixed up with elements of propitiation towards hostile ghosts in the modern European traditions of fairies. That one Romance word has come to be applied to so many Teutonic, Scandinavian, Celtic, and Euskarian superstitions, that it would be absurd to trace them all to a single common origin, though the origin in all cases seems finally to go back to ghosts of one kind or another, friendly or inimical. But I hope I have made it clear that the vast mass of the fairy traditions do really date from the early days of the Celtic or Teutonic struggles with the small dark race which preceded them; that the fairies owe their diminutive size to exaggerated tales of the short stature of the Euskarian people; and that beliefs and superstitions connected with the fairies cluster most thickly about the Neolithic tombs or monuments, and about the objects found buried in their midst. In short, I believe that, mythical as the elves have now become, they represent the last traditional memories of an historical race.

G. A.

Thomas Carlyle.

I do not propose at the present time to attempt anything like a critical estimate of the great man who has just passed from our midst. Better occasions may offer themselves for saying what has to be said in that direction. For the present it would seem that there is little need of speech. Much has been written, and not a little admirably written, in commemoration of the teacher and the message which he delivered to mankind; as also there has not been wanting the usual snarl of the cynic irritated by a chorus of eulogy. Even the feeblest of critics could scarcely fail to catch some of the characteristic features of one of the most vigorous and strongly-marked types that ever appeared in our literature. The strongest amongst them would find it hard to exhaust the full significance of so remarkable a phenomenon. Despair of saying anything not palpably inadequate or anything not already said by many writers might suggest the propriety of silence, were it not that in any review which claims a literary character it might seem unbecoming not to make some passing act of homage to one who was yesterday our foremost man of letters. To do justice to such a theme we ought to have been touched by the mantle of the prophet himself. We should have been masters of the spell wrought by his unique faculty of humorous imagination. When Mr. Carlyle spoke, as he has spoken in so many familiar passages, of the death of a personal friend, or of one of those heroes whom he loved with personal affection, he could thrill us with a pathos peculiar to himself; for no one could adopt more naturally or interpret more forcibly the mood of lofty Stoicism, dominating without deadening the most tender yearning; or enable us at once to recognise the surpassing value of a genuine hero and to feel how dreamlike and transitory all human life appears in presence of the eternal and infinite, and how paltry a thing, in the moments when such glimpses are vouchsafed to us, is the most towering of human ambitions. To express adequately these solemn emotions is the prerogative of men endowed with the true poetic gift. It will be enough for a prosaic critic to recall briefly some of the plain and tangible grounds which justify the pride of his fellow-countrymen—especially of those who follow his calling—in Mr. Carlyle's reputation.

One remark, indeed, suggests itself to every one. Carlyle's life would serve for a better comment than even his writings upon his title, "the hero as man of letters." And it is in that capacity that I shall venture to consider him very briefly without attempting to examine the special

significance or permanent value of his writings. Carlyle, as we all know, indulged in much eloquent declamation upon the merits of silence as compared with speech. Like many other men of literary eminence, he seemed rather to enjoy the depreciation of his own peculiar function. As Scott considered that a mere story-teller or compounder of rhymes was but a poor creature compared with one who played his part on the stage of active life, Carlyle delighted to exalt the merits of the rugged, silent, inarticulate heroes, who used a rougher weapon than the pen, and conquered some fragment of tangible order from the primeval chaos. He idolised Cromwell all the more because the tangle of half intelligible and wholly ungrammatical sentences which the rough-hewn Puritan dashed down upon paper recall the struggles of some huge monster splashing through thick and thin regardless of anything but the shortest road to his end. If Frederick condescended to play at writing verses with Voltaire, it was the pardonable condescension of a great man who could not really for a single instant put the smartest of writers on a level with a genuine king of men. Heartily as Carlyle loved certain great literary teachers, more or less congenial to his own temperament, he always places them on a level distinctly beneath that of statesman or soldier; and as his utterances of this kind often took the form of an unqualified exaltation of silence, it was natural that to some of us he should appear to be guilty of a certain inconsistency. If action were so superior to speech, why not choose the better part himself? Was it not rather extravagant—even for a professed humourist—to pour forth such a torrent of words in order to demonstrate the inutility of words? If he believed in his own doctrine, should he not have preferred to carry a musket or to wield a spade rather than to wear out so vast a quantity of pens and paper? Contempt for literature, though rarely avowed, is one of the commonest sentiments of practical men; but is it not a suicidal creed for a man of letters?

To this, I imagine, Carlyle could have given a very sufficient answer. For, in the first place, he made no special claim upon the respect of mankind in virtue of his office. This task lay in his way to do, and it was not for him to decide whether the task was humble or exalted. Should a man be born in a station of life, from which the best available outlook was the career of a successful scavenger, let him do his scavenging with a will, as heartily and effectually as possible. In that ideal state of the world when each man will have that to do which he can do most perfectly, the parts will be differently distributed. But in the distracted welter, as Carlyle would have called it, of modern social arrangements, each of us is stuck down at random in his separate niche, and must be content to snatch at such waifs and strays of work as happen to be floated nearest to him by the eddies of the perplexed whirlpool of life. Carlyle at another period might have been a Knox heading a great spiritual movement, or at least a Cameronian preacher stimulating the faith of his brethren under the fire of persecution. Under actual circumstances, no

precise post in the army of active workers was open to him ; and he was forced to throw in his lot with the loose bands of literary skirmishers each of whom has to fight for his own hand, and to strike in here and there without concert or combination. The duty might not be a very exalted one ; but it was that which lay nearest at hand. Had he pleased, however, he might have adopted a stronger line of defence. In truth, it would be interpreting a humourist too strictly if we mistook his intense jets of scorn or exhortation for the measured language of prosaic admonition. He did not really mean to assert that silence was better than speech, absolutely and unconditionally ; for that would be something very like nonsense ; nor, again, to declare that the influence which reaches us through the spoken word is essentially inferior to that which breathes from the accomplished deed. For there are words which are among the best of deeds ; as there are certainly deeds which ought properly to be classified amongst the emptiest of words. The fribbler and busybody is certainly not the more tolerable because he does not exhale in mere talk, but is absorbed in a round of petty activity which hinders what it seems to help, or in painfully building up structures which crumble before they are finished. And, as clearly, we must reckon as amongst the most potent of rulers, the men who have spoken a word in season and welded together the vague, unguided aspirations of mankind into a force capable of overthrowing empires and reconstructing societies. The sentiment which really animated Carlyle—to which he gave at times grotesque or extravagant expressions, was simply the expression of a nature marked, perhaps, by some Puritanical narrowness, but glowing with genuine zeal and animated by the deepest possible sense of the solemnity and seriousness of life. The qualities which he admired with his whole soul were force of will, intensity of purpose, exclusive devotion to some worthy end. What he hated from the bottom of his heart were any practices tending to dissipate the energy which might have accomplished great things or to allow it to expend itself upon unreal objects. We may remember, to quote one amongst a thousand instances, his references to that remarkable religious reformer, Ram Dass, who declared himself to have fire enough in his belly to burn up the sins of the whole world. A man, according to his view, is valuable in proportion as he has a share of that sacred fire. We are tempted unfortunately to use it up merely for cooking purposes, or to turn it to account for idle pyrotechnical displays. He is the greatest who uses the fire for its legitimate purposes and in whom it burns with the whitest and most concentrated heat. Perhaps in enforcing this doctrine from every possible point of view, Carlyle may have shown some want of appreciation for certain harmless and agreeable modes of dissipating energy. The Puritan in grain—and certainly the name applies to no one if not to Carlyle—finds a difficulty in coming to an understanding with the lover of a wider culture. But, in any case, it is not really a question between the means of speech and of action, but between those who have and those who have

not an overpowering sense of the paramount importance of the ends to be obtained.

Now it may be fairly said that Carlyle's words have in this sense the quality of deeds. Intensity is the cardinal virtue of his style. The one essential thing with him is to make a deep impression; he must strike at the heart of the hearers and grasp at once the central truth to be inculcated; he cares less than nothing for the rules of art so long as he can gain his end; and will snatch at any weapons in his power, whether he is to be grotesque or sublime, tender or cynical in expression, or to produce an effect not capable of being tabulated under any critical category. The blemishes as well as the surpassing merits of his writings spring equally from a characteristic which naturally makes him unintelligible and at times offensive to men of different temperaments. Now whatever the literary consequences, the man's own personality derived from it a singular impressiveness. Great men are sometimes disappointing; but no one could possibly be disappointed who made a pilgrimage to the little house in Chelsea. It is a feeble expression of the truth to say that the talk resembled the writing; it seemed more frequently to be the quintessence of this writing. Ever afterwards, if you took up *Sartor Resartus* or the *French Revolution*, you seemed to have learnt the inevitable cadence of the sentences; you heard the solemn passages rolled out in the strong current of broad Scotch, and the grotesque phrases recalled the sudden flash of the deep-set eyes and the huge explosions of tremendous laughter full of intense enjoyment, and yet dashed with an undertone of melancholy; or you saw the bent frame in its queer old dressing-gown, taking the pipe from its lips and rapping out some thundering denunciation of modern idols with more than Johnsonian vigour. You came to understand how the oddities which strike some hasty readers as savouring of affectation really expressed the inmost nature of the man; and that the strange light cast upon the world represented the way in which objects spontaneously presented themselves to his singularly constituted imagination. Instead of fancying that he had gradually learnt a queer dialect in order to impress his readers, you came to perceive that the true process was one of gradually learning to trust his natural voice where he had at first thought it necessary to array himself more or less in the conventional costume of ordinary mortals. Briefly it became manifest that the contortions of the Sibyl (to quote Burke's phrase about Johnson) was the effect of a genuine inspiration, and the very reverse of external oddities adopted of *malice prepense*.

The character had thus a power quite independent of the special doctrines asserted. One proof of Carlyle's extraordinary power was the influence which he exercised upon men who differed from him diametrically upon speculative questions. Nobody, for example, represented the very antithesis to his doctrines more distinctly than J. S. Mill. Benthamism and the whole philosophy in which Mill believed were among the favourite objects of Carlyle's denunciation. Yet Mill admits in his

Autobiography that he did not feel himself competent to judge Carlyle; that he read the *Sartor Resartus* "with enthusiastic admiration and the keenest delight," and felt towards the author as the reasoner who "hobbles" along by proof should feel to the poetic seer who perceives by intuition. And many, I believe, of Mill's disciples would be found to owe even more to the stimulus received from their dogmatic opponent than to the direct teaching of their more congenial master. Nobody, indeed, could have gone to Carlyle in order to discuss the evidence of some disputed theory, to balance conflicting considerations, or clear up a point which required dispassionate examination and delicate reasoning. Disciple or antagonist, you had to sit at his feet, to refrain from anything bordering remotely upon argument, and simply to submit to the influence of a nature of extraordinary power and profound convictions. From such a man perhaps more is to be learnt by those who differ than by those who humbly follow. It is rarely good for any man to be fairly overpowered and swept away in the current of another man's thoughts, however lofty their import; and it was as well to have some independent source of mental influence before taking a strong dose of philosophy according to Carlyle. And perhaps, if I may say so, it was by comparing the man with his ardent disciples that one first became sensible of his true magnitude; for almost in proportion to the greatness of the teacher himself was the danger to his humble followers. His head was strong enough to bear a doctrine which seemed to have an intoxicating influence upon those who received it at secondhand. His own writing has merits almost unapproachable in their peculiar character; but Carlylese in the mouths of imitators is amongst the most pestilent jargons by which modern English literature has been disfigured—and that is certainly to say a good deal.

It is unfortunately a common experience to feel that one would be, say, a Radical, were it not for the Radicals. The tail of a party—and the tails of parties are apt to be the largest part of them—is very frequently the strongest argument against the head. It is perhaps a still more melancholy experience that the leaders frequently become the victims of the disciples whom they raise up. The subtle flattery of admiration, the temptation to sustain authority by exaggerating the doctrine which has made a success, is often enough to turn a strong head. And it is one of Carlyle's titles to honour, that he never degenerated into the vulgar president of a mutual admiration society. He had too much self-respect, and was made of materials too sturdy and well-seasoned, to fall into such an error. He had been brought up in too stern a school. For years he had preached to deaf ears, and had been regarded by respectable editors of the Jeffrey variety as the kind of person of whom something might possibly be made, if he could only be induced to run quietly in the traces. There is no appearance that such treatment inflicted lasting wounds upon his vanity, or induced him to swerve an inch from his line of objectionable eccentricity, or to attempt to gain a hearing by any condescension to the tastes of the average reader. He was content

to do the best work he could according to his own notions of what was right, and to leave it to win its way gradually to the place, whatever it might be, which it deserved. He was as independent in life as in thought. There is something in its way sublime about Carlyle's dogmatism; the absolute confidence with which he holds to his creed, and explains all dissent from it by the simple, and certainly in some sense well-founded, consideration of the general stupidity of mankind. It is of course easy to condemn the harshness of many of his judgments; and to hold that he was really showing his own blindness in his sweeping censures of whole schools of philosophers and politicians. But given the conviction, of which I do not here discuss the justification, he acted in the spirit of his creed. It was not, it seems, till he published the *Cromwell*—that is, till he was about fifty—that he gained anything to be called popularity. It would indeed be a libel upon our fathers not to admit that most competent judges had discovered the merits of *Sartor Resartus* or the *French Revolution*. Yet on the whole he was clearly one of the writers whose fame ripens slowly, and ripens all the more surely when he is strong enough to stick to his true vocation in spite of an absence of recognition. A man possessed of Carlyle's amazing power of vivid portraiture had many temptations to cover slightness of work by that sham picturesque with which superficial imitators have made us too familiar. But no one denies that, whatever the accuracy of the colouring in his historical studies, they at least imply the most thoroughgoing and conscientious labour. If Dryasdust does not invest Cromwell or Frederick with the same brilliant lights as Carlyle, he admits fully that Carlyle has not scamped the part of the work upon which the Dryasdust most prides himself. At worst, he can only complain that the poetical creator is rather ungrateful in his way of speaking of the labours by which he has profited. If the *French Revolution* is not in this respect the equal of the later works (in some other qualities it is their superior), it is only, I imagine, because the materials which would be required by a modern historian were not accessible near fifty years ago. It is, indeed, a subsidiary pleasure, in reading all Carlyle's writings, to feel that the artist is always backed up by the conscientious workman. If some of the early articles touch upon subjects fully studied, he has at least done thoroughly whatever he professes to have done; and even in reading later studies upon the same subjects, it is generally manifest that Carlyle's errors are never those of the indolent or superficial scribbler.

The quality manifested is the absolute self-respect and independence of a man who scorns to owe success to anything but the intrinsic merit of good work, or to measure success by the instantaneous harvest of flattery and admiration. No one could stand more firmly upon his own legs, or be more superior, not only to the vulgar forms of temptation, but to those which sometimes assail the loftiest minds. He gave what was in him to give, and spared no pains to give it in the most effective shape; but he

never stooped to court the applause of the unintelligent and unsympathetic. If there was ever a risk of such condescension, it was perhaps at the period when he took to writing pamphlets upon questions of the day. There seemed to be a possibility of his descending from his lofty position to join in the inferior squabbles of politicians and journalists. There is certainly some admirable writing in those pamphlets ; but they touch upon the topics in which his real power deserted him and gave some opportunity to the cavillers. The common criticism that he pointed out defects without suggesting remedies, had then a certain plausibility ; for it is certainly natural to challenge a critic of any particular line of policy to name the policy which would meet his approval. If you attack protection you must advocate free trade, and general denunciation upsets its own aim. Happily Carlyle did not wander long in this region ; and returned to the strong ground of those general moral principles which are independent of the particular issues of every-day politics. The reproach, indeed, followed him beyond its appropriate sphere. Some writers complain that Carlyle did not advance any new doctrine, or succeed in persuading the world of its truth. His life failed, it is suggested, in so far as he did not make any large body of converts with an accepted code of belief. But here, as it seems to me, the criticism becomes irrelevant. No one will dispute that Carlyle taught a strongly marked and highly characteristic creed, though one not easily packed into a definite set of logical formulæ. If there was no particular novelty in his theories, that was his very contention. His aim was to utter the truths which had been the strength and the animating principles of great and good men in all ages. He was not to move us, like a scientific discoverer, by proclaiming novelties, but to utter his protest in behalf of the permanent truths, obscured in the struggle between conflicting dogmas and drowned in the anarchical shrieks of contending parties. He succeeded in so far as he impressed the emotions and the imagination of his fellows, not in so far as he made known to them any new doctrine. Nor was his life to be called a failure, judged by his own standard, because he failed to produce any tangible result. Rightly or wrongly, Carlyle was no worshipper of progress, nor, indeed, a believer in its existence. The fact that an opinion did not make its way in the world was not even a presumption against its truth and importance in a world daily growing more and more chaotic, plunging wildly over Niagaras, falling more hopelessly under the dominion of shams and pursuing wilder phantasms into more boundless regions of distracted bewilderment. His duty was accomplished when he had liberated his own soul ; when he had spoken so much truth as it was given to him to perceive, and left it to work as it might in the general play of incalculable forces. Here is truth : make what you can of it ; if you can translate it into action, so much the better ; if it only serves to animate a few faithful Abdiels, struggling with little hope and even less success against the manifold perplexities of a collapsing order, it has at least been so far useful. The sower must be content when he has cast

the seed ; he must leave it to the Power which rules the universe to decide whether it shall bear fruit a thousandfold, or be choked amongst the tares which are sprouting up in every direction with a growth of unparalleled luxuriance. He has played his part ; and the only pay which he desires or deserves is the consciousness of having played it manfully.

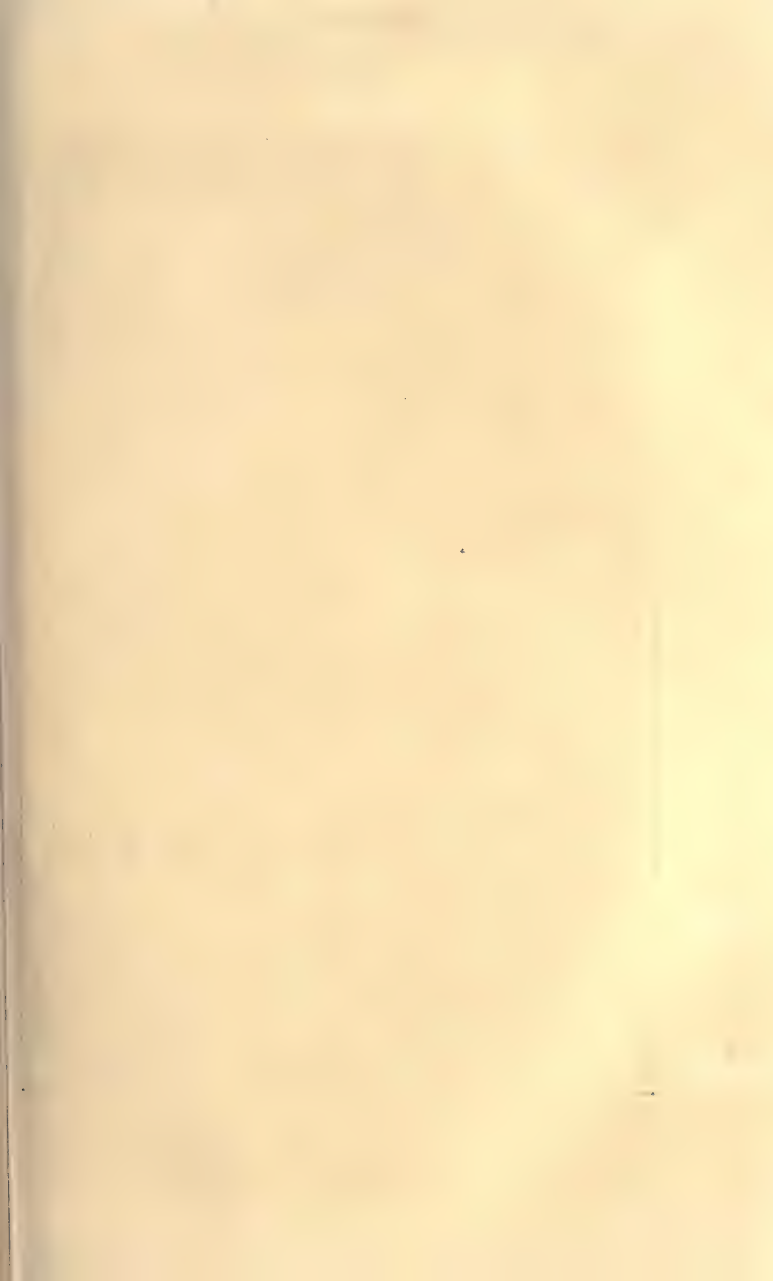
That, as I conceive, would be Carlyle's attitude of mind. It is one which is rare and difficult to sustain amongst professed teachers of men. The keen sensibility which makes a man alive to the miseries of the race and anxious to rouse them from their slumbers, is apt to be a dangerous endowment ; and only the strongest can bear the responsibility of such endowments unharmed. The dangers which beset such men are familiar enough, and may take many shapes of more or less vulgar temptation. The sense of power over the sympathies of your fellows may generate a morbid vanity. People take so much interest in your heart that you are tempted to invite the world at large to be spectators of its most secret emotions, to make a show of your agonies, and to attitudinise as a sentimental sufferer in presence of admiring multitudes. You are anxious to do good by your preachings ; you welcome proselytes to your teaching gladly, because they are proselytes to the truth ; and so you surround yourself with the most demoralising of all audiences—a crowd of submissive admirers who do their best to applaud your worst weaknesses and lead you on in the attempt to outrival yourself by caricaturing your own extravagances. You fancy yourself to be an oracle, and descend to be a mere popular preacher, accepting the vulgarest applause, and courting it by the most facile achievements. You think yourself infallible, and begin to resent every opposition as the proof of a corrupt antipathy. You grow irritable because the world is not converted out of hand, and fritter away your powers on petty controversies which serve only to show that a man may make himself ridiculous in spite of high purposes and great abilities. The type is familiar, and it is needless to quote instances. The reformers of mankind are too often martyrs not only in the sense of suffering at the hands of antagonists, but in the sense of sacrificing much of the purity and loftiness of their own natures in the trial to which they all are exposed. Perhaps we owe them some gratitude even for that kind of sacrifice ; and certainly we must admit that we owe a great debt to many men who, like Rousseau, for example, have been led into countless weaknesses, and even moral errors, under temptations to which they have been rendered liable by a superabundance of genuine sensibility. Men of coarser fibre would have committed fewer errors and been useless to their fellows.

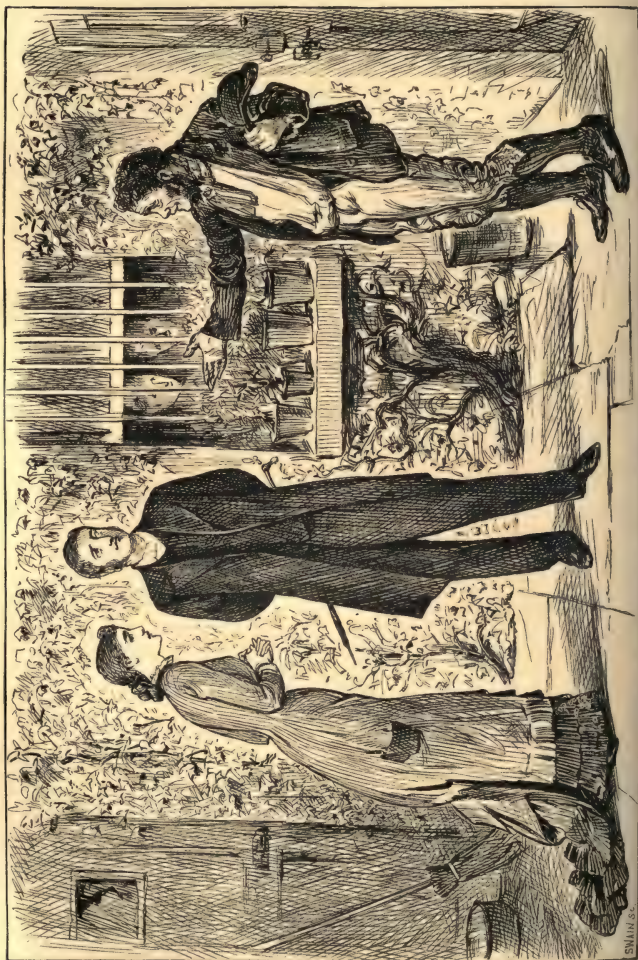
Happily we have no such delicate problems of casuistry in the case of Carlyle. Some people would have been more attracted to him had he not been armed with this grand stoical independence. They feel that there is something harsh about him. They utterly fail to perceive his intense tenderness of feeling, because they cannot understand the self-restraint which forbade him to wear his heart upon his sleeve. They see

indifference to suffering in his profound conviction of the impotence of spasmodic attempts at its relief; and fancy that he was cynical when, in fact, he was only condemning that incontinence of sentiment which cannot bear to recognise the inexorable barriers of human fate. They cannot understand that a man can really be content to give the most concentrated expression to a melancholy view of human life without fidgeting over the schemes of practical reform. There seems to be a kind of antithesis between the apparent pride of a self-contained independence and the ardent sympathies of genuine benevolence. I do not think, indeed, that any one can really love Carlyle's books without becoming sensible of the emotional depth which underlies his reserve and his superficial harshness; nor is it possible to read the *Life of Sterling*—the most purely charming of his writings—without understanding the invincible charm of the man to a fine and affectionate nature. But upon these points we shall be better qualified to speak when we have the biography, which, if one may prophesy in such matters, bids fair to be one of the most delightful of books. For the present, it is enough to say that, whatever else may be said, Carlyle remains the noblest man of letters of his generation; the man who devoted himself with the greatest persistency to bringing out the very best that was in him; who least allowed himself to be diverted from the highest aims; and who knew how to confer a new dignity upon a character not always—if the truth must be spoken—very remarkable for dignity. He showed his eccentricity—as a critic naïvely tells us—by declining the mystic letters G.C.B. But he missed none of the dignity which comes from the unfeigned respect borne by all honest men to a character of absolute independence, the most unspotted honour in every relation of life, and the exclusive devotion of a long life to the high calling imposed by his genius.

What Carlyle's opinion may have been of the state of English literature during his generation it is perhaps better only guessing. Undoubtedly he must have held that it shared in that general decay which, according to him, is a symptom of a state of spiritual and social anarchy. I do not speak, of course, of that kind of printed matter which is held for the moment to be a part of literature, though it should rather be called a quasi-literary manufacture. Grub Street is always with us, and perhaps at the present time it is in a rather more blatant and exuberant condition than usual. But Carlyle would have had a good many hard things to say about writers of high pretensions, and about some in whom one could wish that he should have been more ready to recognise genuine fellow-workers instead of setting them down as mouthpieces of the general babble of futile jargonings. According to him, most of us would do better to hold our tongues or to seek for some honest mode of living which would not involve any swelling of the distracting chorus of advice bestowed by "able editors" upon a bewildered public. A very infinitesimal fraction of modern literature would pass this severe censor as deserving to escape the waste-paper basket. But

one must not interpret a humourist too rigidly ; and we may follow, so far as we may, Carlyle's example without troubling ourselves too much about his rather sweeping dogmas. That little house in Chelsea will long be surrounded with ennobling associations for the humbler brethren of the craft. For near fifty years it was the scene of the laborious industry of the greatest imaginative writer of the day, and the goal of pilgrimages from which no one ever returned without one great reward—the sense, that is, of having been in contact with a man who, whatever his weaknesses or his oddities, was utterly incapable of condescending to unworthy acts or words, or of touching upon any subject without instinctively dwelling upon its deepest moral significance. If his views of facts might be wrong or distorted and his teaching grotesque in form, it could never be flippant or commonplace, or imply any cynical indifference to the deepest interests of humanity. The hero in literature is the man who is invariably and unflinchingly true to himself ; who works to his end undistracted by abuse or flattery, or the temptations of cheap success ; whose struggles are not marked by any conspicuous catastrophes or demands for splendid self-sacrifices ; who has to plod on a steady dull round of monotonous labour, under continual temptation to diverge into easier roads, and with the consciousness that his work may meet with little acceptance, or with a kind of acceptance which is even more irritating than neglect ; and who must therefore place his reward chiefly in the work itself. Such heroism requires no small endowment of high moral qualities ; and they have seldom or never been embodied more fully than in this sturdy, indomitable Scotchman, whose genius seemed to be the natural outcome of the concentrated essence of the strong virtues of his race.





Love the Debt.

CHAPTER VII.

BAENE McGRATH.



WHEN Mabel left Mrs. Lumb's some time later, she was so absorbed in sad doubts about seeing Squire again alive that she did not notice, till she was close upon him, a drunken navvy, who, leaning against a lamp-post, took up most of the narrow footway along which she was passing. As she was stepping hastily out of his reach into the roadway, he put out his hand, caught her by the shoulder, and, cursing and swearing the most frightful endearments, drew her towards him. Before, however, she could realise the horror of the position, the brute lay sprawling in the road, quite still and perfectly satisfied seemingly, bestridden by a dapper little Irish-

man, who poured out a mixture of abuse of him, praise of Mabel, and interjectural asides to the donkey he drove, shaken up together with incoherent volubility. At first, indeed, he was so inarticulate with rage that the mixture flowed, as out of a bottle, in gushes; but soon it swept along in a continuous and impetuous torrent.

"Oh, ye—ye—ye thief of the worruld! ye—ye black-hearted blaguard! Lie there, will ye? Lie there till the divil himself flies away wid ye: ye—ye—— An angel, bad luck to ye! Whose shadow is the sunshine of the sthreet. Dhrinkin' the bed from undher yere wife and childher, and thin waylayin' and maraudin' thim that the saints send to put a bite in their bellies. Is it a man ye are at all at all, or a haythen brute baste? and she, I'll go bail, just comin' away from the little crathur she's been a'most a mother to, God bless her! ye murderin' villain, ye! Woa, Neddy! woa, me lad! Get up wid ye, ye baste, and go home, and don't be dirtyin' the road wid yer carcass"—

"Bob's at the ould address," said Barney, jerking his thumb over his shoulder.

"Where?"

"In the guther."

"Ay," said the savage unconcernedly, replacing his pipe and relapsing into apathy.

"He'll be runned over."

"Like enough."

"Or he'll be runned in by the bobbies, and thin it'll all come out," said Barney significantly. The savage swore a frightful oath, then cleared his throat, and spat down the grating at his feet. Whereupon *de profundis* shrilled a sharp voice up through the grating—

"Bad luck to ye, whoever ye are, that's the third time ye've done that thrick!"

"Nancy!"

"What?" sharp and shrill as a steam whistle.

"Your Bob's fresh."*

"Yes?" interrogatively, as knowing that no one would tell her only *that* as a piece of news.

"He's lying in the street and will be tuk to the station if ye don't have him fetched home."

"The divil fetch him and ye too for a pair of d——," etc. etc. etc. —fortunately unintelligible to Mabel.

The savage, swearing horribly once more, growled to Barney, "Lend us the cart and I'm d——d if I don't fetch him and shove him down the grating to her."

Nothing but consideration for Mabel would have induced Barney to lend his cart to the savage for any purpose; but he knew that if he refused it, Mabel would hear still more awful language than she had heard already, and that if he lent it he might at once hurry her out of this infernal region. Besides, he wasn't sorry to stop short of his home, which he was ashamed that Mabel should see.

"Ye'll not kick the baste?"

"No," with an imprecation.

"And ye'll put him up when ye're done wid him?"

"Aren't ye comin' wid me yourself?"

"I'm not. Tell Molly I'll be home in an hour. He's lyin' outside the 'Yorkshire Chicken.'—This is the shortest way into Clifford Street, Miss," he said hurriedly, pointing up a narrow but short passage. The savage, noticing Mabel for the first time, scowled curiously at her before he turned the donkey back into Sugg Lane. Barney felt quite guilty and crestfallen as he walked after Mabel, silent for a wonder, up the passage. He felt almost as responsible for the language Mabel had heard as if he had uttered it himself. As for Mabel, it was the first time

* "Fresh," i.e. drunk.

in all her visits amongst the poor that she had met with insult, and seen and heard the utmost degradation of poverty. She felt quite faint and sick, and stopping at the top of the passage, she asked—

“What is your name?”

“Barney McGrath, Miss,” answered Barney in a subdued voice.

“Is there a cabstand near, Barney?”

“Yes, Miss, I’ll fetch you a cab,” he replied, thinking “She’s ashamed of me, small blame to her.”

Mabel, divining his thought, “I’d rather you’d take me to it, if you will. I don’t feel quite well, Barney; I don’t think I could walk home.”

Barney, as he looked into her white face, felt ashamed of his suspicions. “It’s only round the corner, Miss.”

“Barney, I don’t know how to thank you,” said Mabel, as they walked together towards the cabstand.

“For bringing ye into that inf—— into that alley, Miss?” said Barney bitterly.

“For defending and protecting me like—like an Irishman,” said Mabel, looking at him with eyes moistened and brightened with a grateful sense of his chivalry.

The compliment to his country cheered Barney like champagne instantaneously.

“Och, thin, it’s little I done for you, Miss, compared wid what you done for me many and many’s the time.”

“I?”

“You’ve been sarmon and priesht and mass to me,” said Barney impetuously, stopping suddenly to emphasise the statement. “Shure, ye seen where I live. Shure, ye heard thim divils. Shure, ye know that’s what I hear and see every day and all day. What good’s Father Quin’s praiching on Sunday, wid thim about your cart on Monday? But when I seen ye, a born lady, and a mere shlip of a gurl—axin’ yer pardon, Miss—when I seen ye followin’ throuble from doore to doore, and from bed to bed, and brightenin’ it up—God bless ye!—as the shpring flowers brighten the black winter earth, I knew there war a heaven, and saints, and angels, and the Blessed Vargin, wid pity in their hearts for us, glory be to God!”

Barney was impressionable and felt all he said, but it must in candour be admitted that he was less used to the ministrations of Father Quin than to those of the landlord of the “Yorkshire Chicken.” In fact, his very impressionability was due in part to the state to which a long and regular attendance at that hostelry had reduced his nerves. For all that there was a deal of good in Barney that hadn’t been worked out, as may be inferred from his genuine worship of Mabel, of whom he had seen much and heard more in hawking his wares among the poor of her neighbourhood. Mabel was at once amazed at Barney’s outburst and ashamed of the little she had done to deserve it. Before, however, she could reply

to it, Barney had sighted a cab, which he ran after, hailed, and returned with.

"You'll come home with me, Barney? My aunt will want to thank you, and I haven't half thanked you myself yet."

"Thank you kindly, Miss, but I'm onaisy about the baste. Black George is the devil's own fist wid his clogs."

"Well, when can you come to see me?" asked Mabel eagerly. "'The Grange,' you know, Bradford Road. Can you come to-morrow?"

Barney felt very sheepish about coming to be thanked in form for so light, little, and agreeable a service as that of knocking a man down, yet he knew that politeness called for his acceptance of so gracious an invitation.

"Well, thank you, Miss," he said, taking his cap off, looking stedfastly at it, and turning it round and round nervously in both his hands, "I might call to-morrow evening, if it would be convanient to ye, Miss."

"Yes, do. I shall be at home all the evening. Good-bye, Barney."

Barney looked at the little gloved hand held out to him through the window of the cab, then at his own vast, horny paw; but again an instinctive politeness taught him to take it as unhesitatingly as it was offered, though he held it as reverentially as if it was the relic of a saint.

"Good-bye, Miss; God bless ye!"

Barney stood for a moment looking after the cab, and thinking with some misgivings over to-morrow evening's appointment. Next moment he bethought him of "his baste," which he was loth to leave to the tender mercies of Black George a minute longer than he could help. He made his way back into Knacker's Alley with all speed to find that Black George's kindly design had not gone well altogether. As the savage led the cart into Sugg Lane he saw Bob, who had been revived by a benevolent bucket of water flung in his face, staggering towards him menacingly. The sight of the cart seemed to remind him that he had been knocked down by its owner, so he made for Black George like lightning, in a zigzag. Black George, having turned the donkey round, and sent it with a curse and a kick in the belly to find its way home, awaited the onslaught with contemptuous equanimity. Bob, tacking wildly, took about a minute to bring up alongside Black George, and had, therefore, time to forget his intention of vengeance, of which, indeed, he lost sight with the disappearance of the donkey, and to become friendly and even affectionate. Black George was too anxious to get him clear of the police and coax him home to repel his affectionate advances, and so the two roamed together down the sweet arcadia of Knacker's Alley, an idyllic spectacle, Bob's arm being wound fondly round Black George's neck. Half way down they came up with Barney's "baste," which, being unpiloted, had got into difficulty (the cart-wheel being locked against a lamp-post), and waited patiently for Hercules to extricate it. Hercules shook Bob off roughly, since he was now, as it seemed, safe at the mouth

of his den, and led the donkey to its stable near the bottom of the alley, where he proceeded to unharness it. Meantime Bob, roused by the rough shake, by the sight and sound of the cart, and, above all, by the inopportune appearance of Barney upon the scene at this moment, reverted to the revengeful mood, and made a drunken dash at Barney. Barney, seeing that Bob wasn't even yet "in a fit state for a baitin'," stood on the defensive, warding off the wild blows, and giving a chaffing lesson in boxing.

"Hould in yere left! Hould in yere left, man! Now, out wid the right! Och! Pugh! Is it playin' skittles ye are?"

The scuffle, Bob's imprecations, and Barney's chaff, hurried Nancy up from the cellar, armed with a skillet she happened fortunately to have been scouring. With a wild warwhoop she made at Barney from behind with the skillet, and would have felled him if he had not ducked and allowed the blow to take effect upon Bob's midriff, bringing him to the ground with a crash. The row roused the whole foul rookery, which cawed and clamoured from every door and window in the alley, but could not drown Nancy's shrill blasphemies, which were loud enough to be heard in Clifford Street, and to bring a passing policeman to the spot. Just before his arrival, Barney, having assured himself that Bob was not seriously hurt, had gone off to look after "his baste," and the policeman found no one to contradict Nancy's account of the affair, which was, of course, that that drunken blackguard Barney McGrath had made a most savage and unprovoked assault upon her inoffensive husband.

"Knocked the sivin senses out of him, the crathur."

As there was no doubt his senses were gone, and some doubt as to whether they had been driven out as much by drink as by violence, the policeman thought it safer to impound Barney than Bob. Following the afflicted Nancy's directions, he went down the alley, and met near the bottom Barney and Black George, who had just come together from the stable.

"Do you know where a man of the name of Barney McGrath lives?" asked the policeman, with official peremptoriness.

Barney knit his brows and puckered his lips together into an expression of perplexed consideration, and muttered musingly, "Barney—Barney McGrath;" then his face lightened with a sudden inspiration, as he said to George, "I'll be bound it's Baste Barney he manes—him that dhriues the donkey." Then, turning to the policeman, he asked, "Is he in throuble now?"

"That's no business of yours."

"'Deed, thin, that's throe; and where he lives is no business of mine, neither. Shtill, I'll answer a civil question when I'm axed. He lives down that cellar just foreninst ye, and here's his missus comin' up the shteps.—Mrs. McGrath, is Barney at home?"

Molly was quick enough to take in the situation, even without the aid of Barney's wink.

"What's that to you?" she said sharply, with a vicious look at the policeman.

"Oh, nothin's nothin' to me," said Barney, in an aggrieved tone; and then, with a sly wink at the policeman, "Ye may take yere oath he isn't far off."

"Come, come, my good woman," said the policeman, thrusting her aside, "I must see him."

As the policeman descended the steps, Black George slouched off at a speed unusual with him, stopping only once to slap his thigh and exclaim, "Well, I'm blowed!"

Barney stood his ground, as he thought it safest that the policeman should look to no one but himself for information.

"Go down and keep the childre from seein' me," he whispered to Molly, who, hurrying down the steps, met the policeman returning disappointed.

"Are ye aisy now?" she sneered, as he passed her.

"Isn't he in?" asked Barney.

"No," replied 43 curtly.

"Divil go wid him; it's in the shtable he is, thin."

"You're a friend of his?" said 43, turning sharply on Barney.

"A frind! He hasn't a worse inimy in the worruld," replied Barney, with genuine bitterness.

"Where's the stable?" asked 43, reassured.

"It's up the borieen here. Anyhow, we can see if he's come home if the baste's in."

"There's no doubt about that. It's not five minutes since he knocked a man down in the alley."

Barney expressed his horror by repeating three or four times that sucking noise made by striking the tongue against the roof of the mouth.

"Think of that, now! He wasn't a policeman, I hope?"

"A policeman!" exclaimed 43, with a disdainful smile, "no; a common man."

"I wouldn't put it pasht him to tackle even a policeman."

"Ah!" said 43, with ineffable meaning.

"And as for dodging, he'd dodge the divil."

"He's not in the force," said 43, chuckling inordinately at his own wit. "McGrath will not find it so easy to take the police in, my man, I can tell you."

"Ah, shure there's no desavin' ye at all at all," said Barney, with wide-eyed admiration.

43 replied by closing one eye altogether for two seconds.

"Begor, it's locked!" said Barney, as they reached the stable door. "If we knew where he was, now, we could get the kay."

"If we knew where he was, we shouldn't want the key, softhead."

"Barrin' he locked himself in."

"How could he lock himself in and it padlocked?"

"Thru for ye. Ye think of everything, faith. There's the 'Brown Jug,' now," he continued, scratching his head reflectively. "He's always in the 'Brown Jug,' when he's at home; but I daren't go wid ye there. The boys would bate me like a carpet if they seen me wid ye."

"The 'Brown Jug'? That's in Limerick Street. What kind of looking man is this McGrath?" asked 43, as they walked together back to Knacker's Alley.

"What sort of a lookin' man is he? Faix he's as fine a looking chap as iver ye seen," said Barney enthusiastically. "As shtraight as a rush, and as shtrong as a bull, wid a fine open countenance like a peony. He's a bit like meself when he's clane and daycent. Ye'd be like to take me for him if ye knew him."

Poor Barney's pun was ominous, for, as they emerged into the alley, there stood Nancy confronting them. She had become uneasy at the delay in the arrest, which she accounted for by supposing that Barney was convincing the policeman of the truth of his own version of the fray; and she had no sooner got Bob into the house than she hurried down the alley to reiterate her own account with tenfold fury. It would probably have turned out as she feared if Barney could have resisted the temptation of "gammoning a bobby;" for his account would have been corroborated by the fact of his sobriety and Bob's drunkenness, by the skillet in Nancy's hand, and perhaps by the testimony of some bystander. Now, however, Barney, like many a better man, had to pay for being too clever, as nothing short of his arrest could satisfy the outraged dignity of 43.

"Oh, ye've took him, have ye, the murtherin' mishereant?"

"Who?"

"Baste Barney, to be shure!"

"No, we haven't found him yet."

"Haven't *what*? And who's that shtanding fut to fut wid ye?"

"It's—it's not——"

"Yes, it's me," said Barney, with the most perfect composure, not to say complacency. "Has she been tellin' ye lies about me?" in an accent of astonishment.

"Lies!" screamed Nancy; and then followed a tirade of accusation, exclamation, abuse, and scurrility, during which 43 had time to realise the audacity and disgrace of the imposture practised upon him.

"You come along with me," he said savagely, turning suddenly and collaring Barney.

"Where am I to go to?"

"To the devil," cried 43, beyond himself with rage.

"I thought he wasn't in the force."

"What is it now, Barney?" asked Molly, whom Nancy's shrill tirade had brought up from her cellar, and who heard enough to know that Barney was identified.

"Faix, it's meself that doesn't know rightly, Molly."

"There's nothin' but throuble," said Molly; "nothin'."

"Don't cry, mavourneen; it'll all come right."

"Will it?" said 43; "we'll see.—Look here, my good woman"—to Nancy—"you and your husband must be in the court-house to-morrow at eleven to give evidence. Do you hear?—Come, my man."

"Hould up, Molly. Find out thim in the alley that seen the row, and ax 'em to come spake the truth in coort."

Molly's reply was lost in the torrent of filthy abuse which Nancy turned to pour out upon her, and Barney was led off in charge of 43.

Molly was not successful in her attempt to procure evidence. Under the twofold fear of a police court and of Bob, Black George & Co., every one denied either seeing the affair, or seeing it distinctly enough to swear to. Bob himself, as was to be expected, kept clear of the court, Nancy accounting for his absence by informing the Bench that "they couldn't put a sixpenny piece on any part of his body that wasn't black and blue." Her story, which she told with such volubility and vehemence that it had to be repeated three times over before the Bench could make out all its bearings, was strongly corroborated by 43, who felt that Barney deserved the utmost punishment he was likely to get, if only for the profane deception he practised on a police officer.

Barney, to Nancy's amazement, admitted having knocked Bob down, but explained that he had done it in Sugg Lane, and not in Knacker's Alley, and that he had done it in defence of a lady whom Bob had assaulted; that he had accompanied the lady to Clifford Street and put her into a cab, and that on his return he was attacked by Bob, "who was that dhrunk he couldn't hit a hayshtack. I kep' him up as well as I could till Nancy came at me wid a shkillet, your worships, and she'd have tuk me a crack that would have knocked daylight through me—for there isn't a woman in the alley can come up to her wid a shtone in the fut of her shtockin'—and, as I was sayin', your worships, she shtruck at me from behind wid a shkillet, and I ducked, and it tuk Bob in the wind and floored him as flat as a tombshtone.—Ye did, ye know ye did, ye shtrap," turning suddenly towards Nancy.—'And thin,' reverting as suddenly towards the Bench, "and thin I went to look afther the baste, your worships, and whin I was comin' out of the shtable I met the policeman, and he axed me, says he, 'Do you know where Barney McGrath lives?' says he. 'I do,' says I, 'and well too;' and I showed him where I lived, your worships, I did," concluded Barney, with a triumphant expression of conscious honesty.

The presiding magistrate, no other than our old friend Josiah Pickles, who was as domineering and dogmatic on the Bench as he was in society, took the case wholly into his own hands. He had hardly patience to hear it to its close, for his natural prejudice against the Irish had been quickened into abhorrence by their political desertion of him at the last election.

"Where are your witnesses?" he asked sharply.

Barney looked vainly round the court.

"The lady you rescued is here, no doubt," with a facetious look at his brothers on the Bench.

Barney had once thought of sending to Mabel, but all his associations with a court made him imagine it a degradation to be summoned there in any capacity, so he put the thought chivalrously aside.

"Ah, I thought not. Is there any one here who knows you and can speak to your character?"

Barney again looked from face to face till his eye lighted on Captain Markham, the chief constable, with whom he, as a witness, had once been brought into relation.

"There's Captain Markham, the chief constable, your worship, he knows me."

"I know nothing whatever about you, my man."

Barney, with wonderful quickness, turned even this to his credit.

"There, do you hear that!" he cried triumphantly.

"He says he knows nothing about you."

"And what could he say more nor that, yere worships? Shure, doesn't he know every thief and dhrunkard and bla-guard and bad charácther in Wefton as well as he knows his own childhre? Do ye think he wouldn't know me if I was the likes of thim?"

Again poor Barney had to pay for being too clever. His quickness served only to convince the other magistrates of what Mr. Pickles was convinced already, that his circumstantial story was only an invention from end to end. After a minute's consultation together, or rather a minute granted graciously by Mr. Pickles to his fellow-magistrates to consider and endorse his sentence, that gentleman summarily despatched the business: "10s., or seven days. Call the next case."

The fine was paid out of a pound which poor Molly had scraped together by pawn and loan, and Barney left the court with his faith in the guardianship of the saints, etc., somewhat shaken, and his hatred of the law as impersonated by Josiah Pickles, M.P., intensified.

CHAPTER VIII.

MISS MASTERS.

WHEN MESSRS. Lawley and Kneeshaw called to remove Squire, they heard from his mother a muddled account of the assault, from which it appeared that Barney and Bob had a terrific combat in Sugg Lane, with the result that Bob was worsted in the field, but Barney in the police court.

"But Miss Masters?" interjected George anxiously.

"Eh! but shoo war flayed,* they tell me."

"Shoo mud well be flayed; aw'd 'ave been flayed mysen," burst in the inevitable and irrepressible Mrs. Greenough, who proceeded then to recount, as a parallel case, an adventure she herself had with "a druften man" when she was in an interesting condition, from which she branched off to her different confinements, the sex and name of each resulting child, with its death under its proper date, or its age, if living, the tyranny of the School Board, her Sarah Jane's extraordinary turn for "twining" a washing machine, and Mrs. Slater's slatternliness in washing on a Thursday, or even Friday, winding up with that hearty burst of self-praise which closes a West Riding speech as naturally as the Doxology a psalm. George, despairing of hearing anything to the purpose in Mrs. Greenough's presence, found out from Mrs. Lumb where Barney lived, and leaving Squire in charge of Mr. Lawley, hurried off to Knacker's Alley.

Meanwhile Barney sat gazing into the fire, with his elbows on his knees and his head between his hands, listening, or affecting to listen, to Molly's scolding, but waking up to unfeigned interest when she came to an inventory of what she had pawned.

"Ye didn't pop any of the childhre's bits of things, did ye?"

"Of coorse I didn't."

"Or any of yere own?"

"'Deed, thin, I did not, Barney," said Molly, softened a little by the knowledge that Barney's questions were inspired by his affection for herself and "the childhre."

"Sorra a fardin' beyand five shillin' would he give on my Sunday gownd, the thief of the worruld! an' it's high mass next Sunday."

"What did ye pop, thin?" asked Barney, relieved.

"A pair of breeches——"

"Shure, I thought ye said ye didn't pop yere own things."

"Yerra, whisht wid yere nonsense! It's jokin' ye'd be if they sould the bed from undher us. A pair of breeches, the laygends of the saints—more be token, he called thim the forty thieves, the haythen!"

"He tuk thim for Proteshtant saints," said Barney inopportunely, for just then George appeared at the door.

Now Barney had come from a part of Ireland where what was called "souperism" was rampant, *i.e.* the interested conversion of destitute Romanists through soup kitchens, etc. He therefore regarded, and had fair reason for regarding, every Protestant clergyman with a mingled feeling of suspicion, aversion, and contempt. It was only after a struggle that his effusive Irish hospitality so far conquered these feelings as to give George a not over cordial invitation to enter and take a seat. Barney was resolved, however, to possess his soul as a Turk keeps his wife—well shut in—as the only certain security against its corruption.

* "Flayed," *i.e.* frightened.

He answered each question as laconically as he could, lest he should give any coign of vantage for controversy to take hold of. "Yes, he was in throuble."—"There wasn't any fight. He knocked him down, that was all."—"She was a bit frightened and sick-like, and he put her into a cab."—"No, thank ye," very ungraciously; for this was in answer to a delicately worded request from George—in which Barney at once scented souperism—that he might be permitted to repay Barney the amount of his fine. George, making all allowance for Barney's soreness under a sense of injustice, was disgusted, nevertheless, with his surliness, and at once took leave, with a curt apology for the offence he had given. Molly was more than disgusted.

"What's come to ye now? Is it takin' lave of yere sinces ye are? 'No, thank ye,' indeed! an' not a bite or sup in the house for the childhre——"

"Would ye have me turn 'souper'?" broke in Barney impatiently. "Ye may pop me breeches, but I'm —— if ye'll pop me sowl!"

Barney could not help being spiritually puffed up after this pious outburst; but, fearing the demoralising effect of Molly's eloquence, he beat an immediate retreat, under the pretext of looking after "the baste." He took the road, however, not to the stable, but to the "Yorkshire Chicken," in the hope that his religious fortitude would be rewarded by Providence putting it into some one's heart to treat him to a pint of beer. Barney was little likely to be disappointed. He was first favourite among the frequenters of that hostelry, in part from his generosity when he was in funds, and in part from his being the only reveller of that choice circle who could raise a laugh without being disgusting.

While Barney was making for the "Yorkshire Chicken," George was well on his way to visit Mabel. He had vowed to avoid that young lady, as he felt that to fall in love with her would double the difficulty of a position which was becoming intolerable; but he easily persuaded himself that the merest politeness required him to call and ask after her. He rehearsed the interview many times over, reducing it to the lowest terms of conventional courtesy; though, do what he would, daydreams, like sunset clouds, obtruded themselves, and crossed and occulted this grey groundwork. George was too young not to indulge in what the Greeks aptly called the *κενή μακαρία*—the hollow happiness—of a daydream. He envied even Barney's inglorious rescue of Mabel, and made it the theme of infinite variations of dangers and deliverances, in which he played the Redcross Knight to Mabel's Una. These soap bubbles of men are not as harmless as those blown by children, with all deference to Macaulay, who attributed to castle building a great part of his success. It is a kind of mental opium-eating, which enervates the mind that habitually indulges in it; and George, who took to it as men take to opium—to escape harassing or harrowing realities—felt, when the fit was over, more helpless and unhappy than before.

He was roused from his reverie and recalled to his resolution by

finding himself in the drawing-room of the gynecium ; for the gynecium which had been established in the days of deaf Miss Murdoch as a necessity, had since her death been maintained by Colonel Masters as a luxury. Its drawing-room was a curious and incongruous room, where the severe Doric style of furniture and ornament introduced by Miss Murdoch was overlaid, and yet rather emphasised than concealed, by the florid Corinthian taste of her successor. It was like the stern stone statue in the Prologue to the *Princess*, which Lilia had bedizened :—

Lilia had wound
A scarf of orange round the stony helm,
And robed the shoulders in a rosy silk,
That made the old warrior from his ivied nook
Glow like a sunbeam.

The stiff straight-backed chairs and the hobbledehoy tables—all legs and elbows—were adorned with gay, not to say garish, draperies worked or chosen by Miss Masters ; while the drab walls were hung with her paintings—glowing fruit and flower pieces and a few startling landscapes, which perhaps represented Nature as she looked in Miss Masters' girlhood, before the fashions had changed. There were also two portraits of Miss Masters herself, one representing her as a child, holding a shell to her ear and evidently listening intently—for the admiring remarks of spectators ; the other depicting her as a pensive maiden looking out from a balcony into the night, not quite as unconscious of observation as Juliet. With the help of her paintings, these portraits, and two pier-glasses, Miss Masters felt quite at home in this room, in which she lived, and in which George found her at work upon another gorgeous group of flowers. She received him with exceeding graciousness, as she set his visit down to the impression she had made upon him at Mr. Pickles' party. Of course we do not mean that she imagined George to be in a fair way of falling in love with her mature charms (though more unlikely things had happened) ; but she did him the justice to think that he could not be insensible to the contrast between her bearing, culture, and conversation, and those of the ladies of Wefton. It never entered her head for a moment that his visit might be meant for Mabel or Colonel Masters.

"How do you do, Mr. Kneeshaw ? It is really very good of you to come to see me. I know I'm not in your parish," she said, speaking, as she always spoke, in gushes, as water flows out of a bottle.

Politeness prevented George undeceiving her by asking at once after Mabel. Not until he had hoped Miss Masters liked Wefton, had complained of the weather, and had admired the painting in progress, did he venture to ask if Miss Mabel Masters had recovered from the shock of yesterday.

"Oh, she's quite well, thank you, to-day. When she came home last night, white and trembling, and told me how she had been frightened by a drunken man, I was quite upset. I felt that I could never again go

out alone in Wefton. I have had such a horror of drunken men ever since we drove over one in Clifton, some years ago. It was terrible, having to give evidence at the inquest, and being in all the papers. Perhaps you remember it? No? It was in the *Times*—nearly half a column. Every one was talking of it. You may fancy how my nerves were shaken! I have not been myself since. The mere mention of a drunken man upsets me. I don't blame Mabel. Poor thing, she was so unnerved that she forgot how I felt about it, or I'm sure she wouldn't have mentioned it. One cannot expect young people to be very considerate, you know, Mr. Kneeshaw," she said, with an indulgent smile.

"I'm afraid I must apologise also for my want of consideration," replied George, with becoming gravity. "It was you I should have asked after, and not Miss Mabel Masters. I hope you have recovered from your agitation."

"Oh, thank you; it's only upset me for the moment; though I'm afraid it will keep me more at home than I like. I quite meant to mix with the Wefton people; but now, really, I dare not venture out alone in such a place. I daren't, indeed. Do you take an interest in the Temperance Question, Mr. Kneeshaw? I understand that the clergy are taking it up. And quite time too. It's a shame that one can hardly walk or drive out in safety. Don't you think something might be done to clear the streets of these people?"

This view of the Temperance Question, as a minor branch of the great Sewage Question, was new and interesting to George.

"Certainly, Miss Masters; there might be a system of moral drainage established to carry them off to inebriate asylums, or they might be carted out of the way by the scavengers. I don't quite see, though, why you should blame us clergy in the matter. It is the Town Council, or the Police, I think, who are in fault:—

Untaught knaves, unmannerly,
To leave a slovenly unhandsome corpse
Betwixt the wind and your nobility."

George was unnecessarily nervous after venturing upon this flagrant banter, for Miss Masters took it in perfect seriousness, and hurried away from the subject only because she feared she was being drawn out of her depth. George was infinitely relieved. He was provoked into the rudeness of raillery by Miss Masters' atrocious insensibility to the wrongs of her adorable niece; but as this adorable being *was* her niece, it would have been the worst policy in the world to have offended her.

Fortunately nothing was further from her thoughts than offence. She had no sense of humour, and a deep sense of her dignity, and could not conceive that anything she said or did might be held up to ridicule. She thought George had expressed himself a little pedantically, perhaps, but with perfect propriety, and was rather pleased to see her idea put into such fine clothes by him. Her only misgiving was lest she should lose the credit she had evidently gained with him for sound sense by

attempting to follow the philosophic turn he had given the subject. So she changed it.

"I am glad you agree with me, Mr. Kneeshaw, about these people. Mabel has such queer notions. I'm sure I don't know where she picked them up, but I do hope the fright she got yesterday will shake them out of her. You can't think what ideas she has about these common people; she says 'they are the best society in Wefton!'"

This was an epigrammatic version of Mabel's answer to her aunt's reflection on her "low" tastes in visiting among the poor: "Really, Aunt, they're not half as vulgar as Mr. Pickles, or half as rude as Miss Sugden."

"The best society in Wefton!" repeated Miss Masters, looking horror through her double eyeglass, which she never used in public, but had forgotten to take off upon the announcement of a visitor. "I'm sure, from what I have seen of it, the society of Wefton is quite as good as that of any of these manufacturing towns. I have stayed in Rochdale. Do you know anything of Rochdale, Mr. Kneeshaw?"

"Rochdale? I'm afraid I know it only as being celebrated for John Bright and the first co-operative society."

"Well, I should hardly call it the *first*, Mr. Kneeshaw; certainly not the first. You must go South for the first society. Indeed, I was going to say that the society in Rochdale was not so select as that of Wefton."

"I've never mixed with the co-operative society of Wefton," said George, who now felt it safe to say anything, and was embittered by despair of seeing Mabel. Miss Masters' attention being thus recalled to the word "co-operative," which she thought was a pedantic expression of George's, and might mean either a society of operatives or of manufacturers, escaped committing herself farther by a second change of subject.

"Ah, you'll not have much time for visiting any but the sick, Mr. Kneeshaw. Mr. Gant told me all about his work, and the immense size of the parish—30,000 people! He calls it a diocese. A most devoted and self-sacrificing clergyman. He sat beside me for nearly two hours the other day at Mr. Pickles', and gave me an account of all the funerals and weddings and services he had to take. I forget how many he said he had buried in one day; or was it married? It must have been married, I think, for he said they took it so lightly. He spoke so highly about marriage. I was quite pleased. No ritualism, you know, or nonsense about the clergy not marrying. Is he engaged, Mr. Kneeshaw?"

This was the net result remaining in Miss Masters' mind of a long discourse of Mr. Gant's, in which he proved conclusively not only that marriage was a sacrament, but that it was a sacrament of which the laity alone might lawfully partake—for Mr. Gant, after infinite flirtations and entanglements, and one "hair-breadth escape" from an "immi-

nent and deadly breach" of promise, now preached the celibacy of the clergy with all the vehemence of apostacy.

"He has no engagement at present—at least, none that I know of," said George, whose attempt to express in this way the variety and frivolity of Mr. Gant's flirtations was wasted on Miss Masters.

"Really! I thought he must be engaged; his mind seemed so full of marriage. I am quite in favour of clergymen marrying, Mr. Kneeshaw," she continued graciously, with an air that would have become an archbishop, "especially in the country. Gives them something to think of, you know. In our own parish the clergyman, Mr. Martin, is unmarried—I may say an old bachelor. He has got into such curious ways—candlesticks and confession; services every day and at all hours; communion Sundays and saints' days: all idleness, Mr. Kneeshaw," she decided, with a peremptory nod of the head.

"'Ye are idle, ye are idle, therefore ye say, Let us go and do sacrifice,'" said George. "You'd have us marry on nothing, and make bricks without straw, Miss Masters; a little sharp connubial suffering and oppression would whip the nonsense out of us. That accounts for your present pastor's—Mr. Meekins'—Low Churchism. He's in the house of bondage, I think?"

Miss Masters was too much shocked to hear a clergyman make a profane use of Scripture to attend particularly to the use he made of it; and, being nonplussed now for the third time by George's enigmatical answers, she began to form a poor opinion of his understanding. Young men sometimes seem to imagine that the way to be thought clever is to show off yourself, and not to help others to show off. With Miss Masters the mistake was deadly, as she would much rather see her own face in the glass than the finest picture ever painted. She was coming, therefore, to regard George as stupid and pedantic, and, worse than all, ritualistic. Her abhorrence of ritualism, by the way, had a more substantial basis than the ordinary prejudice against religious coxcombry. Once, under Mr. Martin's ministrations, she had taken very kindly to ritualism, and even (Mrs. Grundy said) to him; but she was providentially brought back to the Protestant faith by his refusal to wear a stole she had worked for him, in which the green was not the precise shade enjoined on believers, and by his advocacy of doctrines so extreme as those of auricular confession and of the celibacy of the clergy. It was not without good reason, therefore, that Miss Masters was disgusted with ritualism, and with George for his obvious bias that way. Disgusted with him as she was, however, she could not bring herself to be disagreeable. Her one aim in life was to be universally voted charming, and she could not endure to lose even a single vote. Besides, George, whatever were his faults, had the great redeeming merit of being very much taken with her, as his visit proved. Accordingly it occurred to Miss Masters that good manners required her to be complaisant, let her visitor's views be what they would. Taking George to mean by "the

house of bondage" not marriage, but Low Churchism, she said, with a conciliatory smile, "I rather incline that way myself, Mr. Kneeshaw, but I don't try to persuade any one into it. You need have no fear of my attempting to lead you into 'the house of bondage,' as you call it."

George was hardly more amused by her mistaking the application of his metaphor than by her confidence in her controversial powers, and her merciful resolve not to exercise them on him. He was malicious enough to set her right as to his meaning. "I am sorry you should think me such a bigot, Miss Masters, as to speak of Low Churchism as 'the house of bondage'—I meant marriage."

Miss Masters was not in the least disconcerted. On the contrary, she was pleased, as she was always pleased, by an opportunity to speak her mind on marriage, and so give her friends some faint idea of the obstinacy and obduracy of her objection to that state which had resisted such a multitude of brilliant proposals. These triumphs, to which she occasionally referred, were not pure and conscious invention. She took very ordinary for marked attentions, which would, she considered, have ripened into proposals under the sunshine of encouragement, and she had merely to imagine that she had not encouraged them sufficiently.

"Oh marriage! I beg your pardon. I quite agree with you there; quite," she said, with a most emphatic nod; but, remembering that she had just spoken approvingly of Mr. Gant's appreciation of marriage, she added, "I mean, of course, as far as our sex is concerned. It's perfect slavery. I could never understand how a woman with any self-respect could submit to it. I am sure I was staying with my married sister last year, near Louth, in Lincolnshire, you know; and no one would believe what a time I had. Three children in the measles together, and Mr. Hancott, my brother-in-law, laid up with bronchitis, and my poor sister nursing them all, night and day. I was left to myself altogether. Not a soul to speak to. No one came near us, and we went nowhere. If it wasn't that I was very fond of painting, I really don't know what I should have done, as my sister grudged every moment she gave me; in fact, I hardly saw anything of her. That came of having a husband and children to look after, Mr. Kneeshaw."

George was not in a mood to regard the loss of Miss Masters' society as the crushing penalty she considered it. Indeed, he had so reconciled himself to it that he rose at this moment to take leave, but was prevented by the entrance of Mabel.

"How do you do, Mr. Kneeshaw? Have you been long here? You've come to tell me about Squire, I know."

"Well, no; I came to inquire after you, Miss Masters. I was very glad to hear that you had recovered from the shock of yesterday."

"Oh yes, thank you, quite. But how did you hear about it?"

George then proceeded to explain how he had heard from Mrs. Lumb of Barney's knight-errantry, and from Barney himself the true particulars of the affair. "He seems rather a surly fellow," he continued; "but,

to do him justice, he made very little either of what he did or what he suffered on your behalf. And, after all, it was enough to put any man in a bad temper to be taken up and fined for doing the work of the police."

"Taken up and fined!"

Mabel's exaggerated views both of the debt she owed Barney and of the disgrace of a conviction in a police court made this news little less than shocking to her. She horrified her aunt by consulting George upon the propriety of appearing to-morrow in court, and getting the conviction quashed. Meantime, and without a moment's delay, she must go and see and console the hero and martyr. Just, however, as she rang to send for a cab, the maid appeared to say that a man named McGrath was below, and wouldn't go away till he had seen Miss Mabel. Please was she to send for the police? This was too much. Mabel hurried downstairs with an apology to George, only to return immediately in much distress. The hero and martyr was in a rather noisy stage of intoxication. Poor Barney had been treated by a fellow-countryman not to beer, but to whisky, which, as he had eaten little, took immediate effect on him, and made him more heroic than ever. He couldn't rest till he had expressed to Mabel his intention to knock down, for her sake, the Borough Bench of Magistrates.

CHAPTER IX.

MABEL TO THE RESCUE.

BARNEY'S condition, which amused George and horrified and disgusted Miss Masters, made Mabel more miserable than ever. For this also she was responsible, since it must have been the disgrace of an unjust conviction which drove Barney to drown thought. His state, therefore, if it was not a credit, was hardly a reproach to a man of such a nice sense of honour as Barney had shown himself yesterday. This, indeed, seemed so self-evident to Mabel that she not only did not doubt it herself, but did not think that any one with right feeling could doubt it. Accordingly George's cynical comments were so ill received that he suddenly became sympathetic and sentimental. "It is a strange thing," says Bacon, speaking of love, "to note the excess of this passion, and how it braves the nature and value of things;" and George, of whom the passion was getting fast hold, was not in the least ashamed of his hypocrisy, which seemed to him but common politeness. He, too, at once began to see that Barney's intoxication was of itself a part of his martyrdom, and to take a deep and active interest in his case. "I think I had better see the poor fellow," he said, with much feeling; "I shall be better able to manage him than you." While he and Mabel went down to look after the sufferer, Miss Masters, who had for some time been speechless with

indignation, in part because of being ignored during the consultation, and in part because of the maudlin and monstrous sympathy expressed in it towards the abominable Barney, at last so far recovered her presence of mind as to ring for the maid and send her in haste for a policeman. But Barney by this time was outside the jurisdiction of the police—if he had ever been fairly within it. At the sight of Mabel he had ceased to be noisy, and the shocked expression in her face woke him up to a consciousness of not being altogether presentable. She and George found him leaning despondently against the back door, and remonstrating sadly with himself. Upon their appearance he broke off this conversation with himself to explain the cause of his condition at some length, and with many apologies and parentheses. It appeared that he had partaken of some cold potatoes, and it was these that so upset him. Barney was certainly not happy in his choice of an intoxicating food; but it must be said for his account it was so far true as that, on his return from the court in the morning he had indulged in those delicacies as the most palatable food he could find in the house. He now made merely the common mistake of confounding *post hoc* with *propter hoc*.

"What does he say?" asked Mabel, to whom Barney's explanation, disguised by brogue, drink, and parenthesis, was unintelligible.

"He says," replied George, with creditable gravity, "that he has

eaten of the insane root

That takes the reason prisoner.

"What!"

"Cold potatoes," said George sententiously. "He says it was some cold potatoes he ate this morning that took this effect upon him." It was impossible for Mabel not to laugh a little at the effect attributed to this fiery stimulant. "You see," continued George, encouraged by her amusement into a relapse of cynicism—"you see, it was just as you suggested, Miss Masters, the disgrace of his conviction in the court has driven him into the wildest dissipation."

"But what's to be done?" asked Mabel, recalled to seriousness and sympathy by the mention of the court.

"I should say brandy was the best thing to counteract the effect of cold potatoes, if they disagreed with one: unless he's a total abstainer. In that case, the best thing would be to put him into a cab and send him home." But when Mabel, approving of this last suggestion, turned to send the discreet Jane for a cab, she heard, to her consternation, that Jane had been sent already by Miss Masters for a policeman. George, however, volunteered both to intercept Jane and the policeman and to fetch a cab; and while he was gone on these errands, Mabel ran upstairs to find her purse, thinking to take advantage of Barney's state to have the amount of his fine, etc., smuggled into his pocket. When she had found it, and had with some difficulty explained her design to her old nurse—who, being Yorkshire, was not easily made to understand how anyone in his sober senses could refuse "brass"—she at last induced that tetchy old

body to come down with her and, if possible, slip the money into Barney's pocket. But Barney was nowhere to be found. George, Jane, the policeman, and the cab, were all there together, but no Barney. Jane, being an expert, had at once found her own policeman, for whom she was so anxious to be sent, but made the return journey "linked sweetness long drawn out," by a wide detour, so that George found the two only on his return with the cab. Meanwhile, Barney having become sufficiently sober to be conscious of tipsiness, had ducked his head in the waterbutt, and so far completed his cure as to feel shocked and ashamed of himself, and as to be able to slink homewards with fair speed and directness. George, having dismissed the cabman with a fare, and the policeman with a solatium, returned for orders to Mabel. "What next?" he asked, with an amused smile. Mabel would have liked to have had the derelict pursued and towed out of danger, as she feared that Barney would fall again into the hands of the police; but this, of course, she could not ask George to do. Indeed, it was not without much compunction that she asked him to do the next best thing.

"I am really quite ashamed of putting you to so much trouble, Mr. Kneeshaw, but I should be so much obliged if you could kindly call some time and see if he got safely home. It would be too bad if he was again taken up and fined, or put in prison."

"Of course I shall call to see him," said George. "He's on my sick list, you know, now, since his singular seizure this morning. By the way, though, seriously, I ought to have kept the cab, oughtn't I? I should soon have caught him up. It's not too late now, perhaps," he continued; and seeing Mabel look infinitely relieved at the suggestion, he bid her a hurried goodbye, promising to let her know the result early the next day.

In this way Barney's lapse became an unromantic link in the chain of fate which bound George. For Mabel, who had Barney's rehabilitation at heart, and could not of course consult her father or aunt upon the business, was driven to make use of George's counsel and help; and her childlike dependence upon them completed his conquest.

May we hint here to those of the sex who thirst for emancipation, that there is nothing so winning to men who are worth winning—the strong and self-reliant—as this childlike dependence? Their own instincts—at least a mother's instincts—would tell them how love is drawn out by dependence. A mother always loves most the child that is most dependent upon her—the baby at the breast more than the upgrown son; and of the upgrown sons, him who is weakest in mind and body rather than him of whom she has most reason to be proud. And if we go down to mother's love, pure, simple, and unsophisticated, as we find it in the lower animals, we see that it wanes, waxes, or ceases in precise proportion to the dependence upon them of their young. It is strongest when they are weakest, and weakest when they are strongest, and ceases the moment they become independent of it. And how much dependence

has to do with love of other kinds may be seen from this—that, as in biography so in life, we love most the most dependent characters—the Steeles and Goldsmiths of our acquaintance; and also from this that our expressions of affection are generally (as, for instance, diminutives) expressive of dependence. All this being considered, we conclude that when the relations between the sexes are wholly reversed, and men are as dependent on women as women are to-day upon men, romantic love will again be possible; but that in the intervening and intermediate state of things now dawning upon us, when women come only abreast with men and have not yet distanced them, there will be little place left in life for love as distinguished from passion. As for Mabel, truth constrains us to say that she had not even left Egypt, so that the intervening desert, not to say the promised land beyond it, was not in all her thoughts. On the contrary, her extravagant veneration for her father's judgment made her share, in some degree, his extravagant contempt for her sex's mental capacity, and gave her especially an inordinately modest opinion of her own. And this brings us back to the point from which we started on our dry digression—Mabel's childlike deference to George's judgment. Here was a girl at once clever and beautiful looking up to him with an unaffected and implicit trust in his wisdom. To be sure it was in a matter of no moment, but it was the manner which intoxicated George, and might well have intoxicated a less susceptible subject. When he called the next morning—early, as she had asked him—he found her alone, as Miss Masters rarely put in an appearance before noon.

"I am so glad to see you, Mr. Kneeshaw; you don't know how impatiently I have been expecting you," she said, with a frankness which showed her unconsciousness of George's having any other interests than those of Barney to serve by his visit. "Did he get home safely?"

"Oh, he's all right," said George, who, to tell the truth, had not Barney at this moment much in his thoughts. "I overtook him in five minutes, but nothing would induce him to get into the cab; so I dismissed it and dogged him home to be ready to intercede in case the police interfered. But he wasn't tipsy enough to be meddled with. I'm not sorry I followed him, though, for I found out I had done him an injustice. I told you how surly he was when I called yesterday morning. I thought it was natural brutality, but it turns out he took me for what his wife called a 'souper'—that is, as well as I could make out, a missionary who wins souls with soup in Ireland, where they seem cheap. She said he thought I meant to convert him because I offered to pay his fine!"

"I wish he had taken it—at least—I mean," stammered Mabel, colouring at her vicarious generosity, "I wish he had let you pay it to him from me."

"To invest it in cold potatoes," muttered George, who, however, didn't think fit to mention that Molly had taken the money from him last night without the least religious scruple.

"You must let me thank you for the offer, Mr. Kneeshaw, if he didn't. It was my debt, or part of my debt. I really don't know how I'm to repay the poor fellow for all he has gone through for me—unless," she added brightly, "I borrow from you to pay him, like a desperate debtor. For I still want your advice and help, Mr. Kneeshaw, if I haven't put you to too much trouble about him already," looking appealingly at George.

"I fetched a cab for him, and walked home his way. You could hardly ask me to do more than that," he replied, with a pleasant irony more reassuring than an effusive offer of help.

"I'm afraid I must, though," she said, smiling. "You see, Mr. Kneeshaw, my father is so taken up with his studies; and as for my aunt, she was quite disappointed that Barney escaped the policeman yesterday; and I have no idea myself what I ought to do to get his sentence reversed. Must I appear in court?" she asked anxiously. To appear in court would be not only terrible in itself, but in its consequences, for it would certainly bring down upon her from her father a peremptory prohibition of her work amongst the poor.

"It's too late for that now," said George. "By the way, I saw the police-sergeant this morning, and he told me something that gave me a better opinion of our hero than, to tell the truth, I had before. He said that he himself told McGrath his only chance of escaping a fine or imprisonment was to call you as a witness; and when he refused, because, as he said, the court wasn't a fit place for such as you, the sergeant was certain his whole story was an invention."

Mabel started up and walked twice hastily up and down the room with an emotion that seemed out of all proportion to its cause. It must be remembered that she could not look at a conviction in a police-court from Barney's, or even from George's, philosophic standpoint.

"It was noble of him!" she said, stopping suddenly in front of George with her large eyes as bright with admiration as if Barney had led a forlorn hope. George also looked all admiration, only its object was different. "What *can* I do, Mr. Kneeshaw?" she said, reseating herself, and looking up wistfully at George.

"Well," said George, "I consulted three experts—a magistrate, a dog-stealer, and a solicitor, all friends of mine—and all seemed to think McGrath's character was less damaged than his purse by the sentence. But," he hurried on to say, seeing gathering wrath in Mabel's face, "they thought the thing might be set right either by the prosecution of the policeman for perjury—which would hardly hold water—or by a few words from the Bench next Thursday. In the last case you need not, they thought, appear at all, as a letter from you to one of the magistrates—who would not, of course, publish your name—would probably be enough. My friend, the dog-stealer, by-the-bye, saw the whole business from first to last, though a wholesome horror of the police, and a modest appreciation of the weight which would attach to

his evidence, kept him from coming forward yesterday. However, I induced him, for old acquaintance' sake—for I had attended him in small-pox—to go with me this morning to the chief constable. I can't say that his evidence had an overwhelming effect upon that functionary—rather the contrary; so I went so far as to say," continued George, hesitatingly, "that perhaps you would be kind enough to see the great man."

George seemed to have worked hard in the few hours since Mabel had chartered him for this service, and yet that young lady, in her breathless interest in Barney's case, did not pause, for the moment, to thank him, from which it may be inferred that she at least was heart whole.

"I shall go at once to see him," said Mabel, half rising; but, recollecting and reseating herself, apologised to George for her rudeness.

"I feel so helpless—putting you to so much trouble on my account, and not being able to do anything myself. I hope you don't think me ungrateful, Mr. Kneeshaw?"

"You haven't much to thank me for, Miss Masters; and as to Mr. McGrath, he certainly can't complain of your ingratitude," said George—not satirically. If Miss Roxby had been as demonstratively and disproportionately moved by Barney's chivalry as Mabel had been, the cynical Mr. Kneeshaw would have pronounced her either hysterical or affected; but Miss Roxby was not lovely—was, to say the truth, rather unlovely; and Mabel's childlike or, if you like, childish impulsiveness made her look lovelier than ever. An eighth of an inch of eyelash more or less makes a great difference in our moral judgments of a young lady; so that even if Mabel had affected the feeling she showed, George would have forgiven her; whereas, it had obviously taken her out of herself altogether, making her forget herself and George also, unfortunately, for the moment.

"And as for feeling yourself helpless," continued George, "you can do more for McGrath by seeing the chief constable than could be done for him by any one else or in any other way. For I'm told that the whole Bench of Magistrates together is not of equal authority with Captain Markham in a case of this kind."

"When could I see him?" she asked eagerly.

"He said he would be at home from eleven to half-past twelve."

"It's nearly twelve now," she said, with a glance at the clock and then at the door; for her aunt—who would certainly do all she could to frustrate the plan—was almost due.

"It's not more than five minutes' drive from here," said George, rising resignedly, for the short interview had been very sweet to him. "May I fetch you a cab?"

"Thank you very much, Mr. Kneeshaw. To tell you the truth, I'm afraid of my aunt's coming down and upsetting our plan altogether. I shall run up and put my things on and be at the door before the cab comes."

She was at the door as she promised, when the cab drove up. George got out, handed her in, and was about to shut the door when she cried out in a surprised and dismayed voice, "Aren't *you* coming, Mr. Kneeshaw?"

Obviously nothing was farther from Mabel's thoughts than his being in love with her; nevertheless, the invitation, despite of its frank unconsciousness, was delightful to him.

"I shall be only too glad, if you think I can be of any use."

"Any use!" she exclaimed, as George got in. "Why, you didn't really suppose I could face by myself that terrible Captain, who is equal to a whole Bench of Magistrates? He'll probably take me for another of your dog-stealing friends. Will he cross-examine me?" she asked anxiously, not without a real fear of some such brutal and browbeating cross-examinations as she had read in the papers.

"It is only in public they cross-examine; in private they merely put you to the torture. He may use the thumbscrews for form's sake," said George, looking at the little gloved hand which held the window-strap with a lover's longing to have it in his own.

"He will allow me to be chloroformed first, of course;" and then, with sudden seriousness, as if the thought struck her in full force for the first time, she said, looking at him with clear, earnest, honest eyes, as un-self-conscious as the eyes of a fawn, "What trouble you have taken, Mr. Kneeshaw! You must have done nothing else since I saw you."

"I've done nothing since but eat and sleep. I met my dog-stealer as I left McGrath's, and the magistrate and solicitor I dined with at Mr. Marsden's. I only went a few yards out of my way to arrange an interview for you with Captain Markham, for which you have every reason to be grateful."

"And so I am," said Mabel heartily. "It's the only thing you've left me to do for my hero. I hope he'll believe me," she added doubtfully. "Shall I have to take an oath?"

It was impossible for George not to laugh at the idea of any one distrusting that face, or suspecting her of collusion with a drunken Irishman.

"But, you know, he didn't believe your other friend," she said, in answer to his laugh.

"No; he said I should procure better assurance than Bardolph," said George, still laughing.

"I like not the security," said Mabel, shaking her head—"only a woman. He'll think that I exaggerate, or that I took one man for the other, or made some such other slight mistake, as women, you know, always do."

"We shall see soon," said George, "for here we are."

Mabel got out and walked with no little trepidation into the awful audience chamber, but was relieved to find a quiet and gentlemanly-looking man, who in turn found her as different as possible from what he expected. Captain Markham, according to his custom, had prepared

himself for the interview by questioning those of the force who were likely to know anything about Miss Masters. It turned out that she was nearly as well known to the police as her fellow-witness, the dog-stealer, but fortunately more favourably. She was always going about doing good amongst the poor of her own neighbourhood, and occasionally of other neighbourhoods, was the substance of their report. Captain Markham accordingly pictured to himself either a second Miss Langham—a sour-visaged Protestant old maid, who served tracts like writs among the poor, summoning them, under awful penalties, to appear in church; or a second sister Agnes—a meek and insipid Anglican old maid who symbolised her being dead to the world by going about in a costume like a coffin lined with a shroud. What was his amazement to see certainly the loveliest face he had ever seen—and Captain Markham had all a soldier's susceptibility to beauty—and to find this new sister of mercy as charming in bearing as in person. Mabel, on the other hand, was hardly less agreeably surprised to find Bluebeard courteous, deferential, even apologetic. He was so sorry that press of business prevented him from waiting on Miss Masters. He hoped she would forgive him for putting her to the trouble to come to his office, and so on. This was the first effect of Mabel's beauty upon the gallant Captain, and the second was to secure a most favourable hearing for her story. Indeed, even if Mabel had been ill-favoured and ill-mannered, her story, told with simple directness, would have convinced Captain Markham that there had been a gross miscarriage of justice in Barney's case, though he would certainly not have been so zealous to redress it as he showed himself now. He rang and asked if Barker had returned. Barker was the sergeant whom George had seen that morning, and who had been sent at George's suggestion to make inquiry into the matter in Knacker's Alley. He had now returned with overwhelming confirmation of Barney's version of the affray in Knacker's Alley, to which Mabel couldn't speak. In fact, every one in the alley was eager to give unofficial evidence against Bob and Nancy, who were hated as much as they were feared, though all had a wholesome horror of venturing into court.

"It's been a very unfortunate mistake for McGrath," said George.

"Unfortunate! My dear sir, it's the best thing ever happened to him. I should say it will be ten pounds in his pocket, if it's a penny. There's the Mayor two guineas; Roxburgh, Reed, & Palmer a guinea each; Pickles probably three guineas, or perhaps five, as it's near an election," calculated the Captain, counting on his fingers the sums by which the Bench of Magistrates were likely to indemnify Barney for their mistake, and to reward him for his chivalry. "Ten pounds! If it gets into the papers it will be nearer twenty. He could drink himself to death upon it!" cried the Captain, with an emphatic nod at Mabel, to confirm this assurance that her hero would be well provided for.

George, seeing that the happy consummation suggested by the Captain had not a cheering effect upon Mabel, changed the subject by

asking if Miss Masters need take any other step in the matter, such as that of writing to one of the magistrates. This question touched the Captain on two strong points—his gallantry and his self-importance.

"I have put Miss Masters to a great deal too much trouble already," he said, with a deferential bow to Mabel; "the least I can do is to take the case altogether into my own hands. I shall lay the matter *myself* before the magistrates." The words were not weighty, but the tone and manner in which they were uttered were imperial—expressing at once infinite condescension and confidence. After this there was nothing more to be said but thanks and adieus. Mabel took leave without backing out of the presence, since the great man himself politely ushered her out, and George meekly followed. While the Captain, on his return to his office, was congratulating himself upon another and most brilliant conquest, Mabel was thinking that if the wisdom of Weston was represented by the Bench, and that of the Bench by the Captain—as Mr. Kneeshaw had suggested—perhaps men were not, really, after all, so immeasurably superior in mental power to women as her father maintained.

"Will the magistrates really do as *he* bids them?" she asked George, not at all reassured as to Barney's rehabilitation.

"So Mr. Roxburgh told me last night. The Captain is really a very clever fellow, Miss Masters, though he doesn't show to advantage in ladies' society. Great soldiers, you know, never do. I think McGrath's case safe in his hands."

Mabel had another trouble in reserve. "Mr. Kneeshaw," she said, after a pause, "do you think I could get him to sign the pledge with me?"

"To sign it, certainly."

"But not keep it?"

"Well, no; I'm afraid not." Another pause.

"I haven't courage to go again into that alley. Mr. Kneeshaw, would you mind going there once more for me, and asking him to come to see me? I'm really ashamed of putting you to all this trouble."

George was grateful even for this little commission.

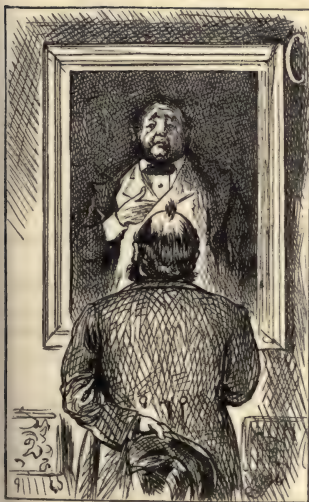


THE
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Love the Debt.

CHAPTER X.
"IN THE NET."



CAPTAIN MARKHAM had not miscalculated upon the justice and generosity of the Weston Bench, as a whole, in the matter of the apology and indemnity to Barney; though Mr. Pickles did not subscribe to either. He never had been wrong in his judgment of men and things, and it was little likely that he should be wrong now in the case of a drunken Irishman. Captain Markham, however, for a wonder, so carried the Council with him that they overruled the Pope, and Mr. Pickles had to content himself with an intemperate protest against the public apology and an angry refusal to have anything to do with the subscription. The sum collected amounted in all to thirty pounds, as the report of the

case in the papers attracted some subscriptions from the public at large. It was an immense sum to Barney, and held out to him a fair prospect

of spending the rest of his days in delirium tremens. But the very day after he received it from the hands of Captain Markham, Barney took the pledge! No one would believe it, but it was true. Mabel had seized hold of the moment when he was utterly and abjectly ashamed of the state in which he had presented himself to her, and had so beset and bewildered him that he lost all control over himself, and signed the pledge. The thing did not seem so terrible to him in the doing of it, but he had not gone many steps from the house when what he had done broke upon him in all its horror. He stopped to lean against a lamp-post, the picture of remorse. Never more must he go to the "Yorkshire Chicken" or the "Flute and Fiddle," and crack the best joke and sing the best song. And the frequenters of those favourite hostelryes—what would they now think of him? He had for ever forfeited the esteem of every friend he had. The respect of his fellows—that single consideration, which ballasts us more than all other motives to morality put together—was gone. And yet he had not done this thing deliberately. He was suddenly surprised, and, as it were, betrayed into it, and betrayed into it just at the moment when he seemed most proof against temptation, not last week, when he had not a penny, but to-day, when he had heaps of money to spare and spend in his favourite haunts. Certainly the ways of Providence were inscrutable—as inscrutable to Barney as to Henry IV. :—

She either gives a stomach and no food,
Such are the poor, in health; or else a feast,
And takes away the stomach, such are the rich,
That have abundance and enjoy it not.

At this miserable period of his meditations Barney turned back towards the house, not to rail the seal from off his bond, but to ask the fair Mephistopheles, to whom he had sold himself, to help him to keep the compact.

"What is it, Barney?" Mabel asked anxiously, upon his re-appearance. She feared he had come back already to repudiate his pledge.

"It's this, Miss," said Barney, in the tone of a man who was making upon the scaffold a last disposition of his effects. "It's no use to me now," handing her the purse of sovereigns. "If you wouldn't mind keeping it, Miss, for Molly and the childhre, and giving thim a shillin' or two a week out of it."

Mabel would have been amused at the testamentary tone of the request if it hadn't expressed so plainly and plaintively the sacrifice she had just induced him to make. "Couldn't you put it into the bank, Barney?"

"Is it the likes of Molly to set her fut in a bank?"

"Well; would you ask Mr. Kneeshaw to take charge of it? He would know best how to invest it?"

"The parson?" asked Barney, in a very doubtful tone.

"Or there's your own clergyman," suggested Mabel, answering rather the tone than the question.

"Father Quin!" exclaimed Barney, in a tone not now doubtful at all, but decidedly adverse; "shure, he's building a mission chapel."

Since this objection was urged as obviously fatal, Mabel fell back upon Mr. Kneeshaw.

"I think you might trust Mr. Kneeshaw, Barney."

"Why wouldn't I thrust him, why? 'Tisn't that at all, Miss; but what am I to say to Father Quin when he calls—and faith, he's as shure as the gas-rate to call, if he reads of my bit of luck in the papers? 'Well, McGrath,' he'll say, 'what are you going to do wid that bit of money,' he'll say, 'are you going to make your sowl up wid it?' he'll say. Shure, I couldn't have the face to tell his rivrence I gev' it to a souper."

"Well, then, I'll take charge of it, Barney, if you'll allow me to ask Mr. Kneeshaw what's best to be done with it."

"In course you may, Miss, and thank ye kindly for all the throuble ye're takin' about it. There's a mather of twenty-three pounds, Miss, left; as I gev' Molly five pounds and kep' one pound for Father Quin's chapel, and thrated the boys wid another."

"Barney," said Mabel, putting her soft white hand entreatingly on his sleeve, "you *will* keep teetotal, won't you?" and her eyes and voice, imploring as her hand, would have converted Bacchus.

"I will, Miss, I will," said Barney, gathering himself together as for a supreme effort, and going forth from the house as on a forlorn hope.

Barney was not far wrong about Father Quin, whom he found waiting for him on reaching home.

"Glad to see you, McGrath," said the worthy Father; "what about those plants you were to bring me?"

"Shure, your rivrence, ye didn't order thim; ye only talked about ordering thim."

"Of course I ordered them. You may bring half-a-dozen—let's see; how much are they each?"

"They're sixpence aich to *ye*, yere rivrence."

"Sixpence each. I'll say a dozen, then. You can bring a dozen of them to my house to-morrow."

"Thank yere rivrence."

"Let them be hardy ones that will stand the smoke, you know. Father Hanlon says that he couldn't get those you sold him to grow in his garden."

"His garden! Hear that now! Begor, it's for all the worruld like the back of an elephant in a menagerie—hard, dry, and cracked, wid an odd bristle of grass here and there! To think of any dacently brought up plant livin' in it! But any plant would be at home in yere place, yere rivrence," said Barney, not unconscious of the rivalry between Fathers Quin and Hanlon as to what they were pleased to call their gardens.

"Well, we shall see. Bring them and plant them yourself, so that

they may have every chance." And then the good Father began to talk about the children, whom he patted on the head in turn, being especially taken with the baby. Hearing, however, that it was not yet baptized, nor its mother churched, he gave the parents a genial scolding, and exacted from them a promise to have both these neglects repaired upon the following Sunday. On rising to leave, he suddenly bethought him, before he reached the door, of Barney's good fortune. "Oh, by the way, McGrath, I nearly forgot to congratulate you. You have been distinguishing yourself, I hear. In fact, it's in all the papers. I'm sure I was proud to see a good Catholic so spoken of, and, better than spoken of, most handsomely rewarded. How much was it, eh?"

"Thirty pounds, your rivrence," said Barney, who wished heartily now that he hadn't, on his way home, given to a needy friend half of the sovereign he had intended for the mission chapel.

"Thirty pounds!" exclaimed the astonished Father, with raised eyebrows—"a most magnificent present! What are you going to do with all that money? I know what you are going to do with some of it, my son; yes, yes, I've not been mistaken in you. I'll be bound the first thing you thought of was the mission chapel. Wasn't it now? I thought so; I thought so," said the delighted Father, as Barney fumbled desperately in his pockets, and produced at last—half-a-sovereign!

"Oh, ten shillings!" cried the Father, with a sudden change from the most genial to the most scathing manner. "You haven't made a mistake, have you? It wasn't sixpence you meant to give me? No? Oh, thank you—thank you very much—good evening!"

It must be remembered that, after all, Father Quin was not begging for himself, but for a mission chapel, that would give him a deal more work without more pay. At least the motive, if not the mode, of his begging was commendable.

Next day, when Barney had brought and put in the plants and presented himself for payment, Father Quin was freezing in his reception of him. "Ah; you've put them in, have you?"

"I have, yere rivrence."

"You're sure they'll live?"

"I'm shure they will, yere rivrence."

"Then you're sure of getting paid. I shall pay you if they live; not otherwise. Good morning, McGrath."

Barney didn't mind much the Father's refusal to pay, but the rasping manner of his refusal was exasperating. However, on the following day—Sunday—when he, Molly, and the baby presented themselves, according to promise, Barney was still civility itself, until the ceremony was over and the fees demanded.

"Do ye think, now, he'll live, yere rivrence?" asked the anxious father, looking down on his newly christened babe.

"There isn't much doubt of that," said Father Quin, touching with two fingers the chubby cheek of the child.

"Thin there isn't much doubt but ye'll be paid, yere rivirence. If he lives, I'll pay ye. Good morning to yere rivirence." And before the amazed Father had recovered himself so far as to be able to articulate, Barney had hurried Molly out of the chapel.

Father Quin took Barney's revenge, when he had realised it, in an unlooked-for way. It was evident that he wasn't angry, or merely amused, for he chuckled and rubbed his hands together with an unaccountable self-complacency. In truth, the thought that came to the top in his mind was this: "That will make a good story." Story-telling was the good Father's forte. Among the first of the few innocent pleasures permitted to his cloth are eating a good dinner and telling well a good story—two things that, of course, go together, as a good story-teller is sure of a good dinner. Now Father Quin was a capital story-teller, and owed to his eminence in the art his welcome at some of the best tables in Wefton. No sooner, therefore, had he realised Barney's facetious revenge than he set to, like a skilled *chef*, to prepare the story for presentation at table; and was so pleased with his successful transformation of it, in his own mind, into something which would certainly tell, that he began to feel quite kindly towards the man to whom he owed it. "I must cultivate that fellow," he thought; and when, at a dinner party on the day following, the story, owing to his telling, turned out as great a hit as he expected, he was in the best possible mood for reconciliation with Barney at their next encounter. Meanwhile, Barney had repented of his irreverent audacity. Molly, who anticipated nothing less than excommunication as its penalty, led him a harassed life of reproach, and Barney himself was not at all comfortable as to the spiritual punishment appropriate to his sacrilege. He was infinitely relieved, therefore, as he was slouching shamefaced at the off side of his "baste" past the good Father, two or three days after, to hear himself cheerfully and even cordially accosted by "his rivirence."

"Is that you, McGrath? We're quits now, aren't we?"

"Indeed, thin, we're not, your rivirence," answered Barney, with much presence of mind; "I'm ten shillings to the bad wid ye yet."

"How's that?" asked his reverence, in a surprised tone.

Barney then told the whole story of his entrusting the money to Miss Masters, with the reservation of a sovereign for the mission chapel, half of which Mat Kenny had coaxed out of him on his way home.

"But here it is, yere rivirence," said Barney, handing it over with a cheerful confidence of forgiveness. But to his surprise, the good Father seemed more aggrieved by the peace offering than by the offence it was meant to gild over. In fact, Father Quin was affronted by Barney's banking his money with anyone but his parish priest, though of course he was too proud to complain of the slight.

"Oh, Miss Masters; that's the young lady you rescued," said he, after he had coldly accepted the half-sovereign. "She gives you tracts, I suppose?"

"Sorra a thract, yere rivrence. It's her life that's a thract," said Barney enthusiastically, and proceeded to tell the priest all the good she did, and the last and most wonderful work of all—his own conversion to teetotalism.

"She's made a teetotaller of you, has she? She'll be making a heretic of you next."

"Is that the next best thing, yere rivrence?" asked Barney, irritated by such an imputation on his goddess. "If she can make anything at all of me, she'll not make me worse than I am."

"Not much room on that side," said Father Quin drily.

"'Deed, thin, that's thrue," throwing back his head despondently.

"Well, McGrath," said the worthy Father, appeased by Barney's humility. "I've been doing you a good turn; good for evil, you know. I met Mr. Mullen at dinner the other night, and recommended him to order all his bedding-out plants from you." This was not strictly true. Mr. Mullen was so tickled by Father Quin's improved version of Barney's revenge that he spontaneously vowed he would buy all his plants in future from the hero of the tale. "I hope you'll do credit to my recommendation. No use trying to do *him*, I can tell you. He's a deal harder man to deal with than I."

"Not much room on that side," muttered Barney, under cover of stooping to pick up his whip. Nevertheless he had not the least compunction in saying aloud, "He might aisy be that, yere rivrence. If all my customers were like ye, yere rivrence, faix, it's in a bether worruld I'd be to-day," looking up at Father Quin with an expression of such absolute innocence that the priest felt quite ashamed of his suspicion of the *double entendre*. Still, as the only transaction Barney had with Father Quin was the one we have recorded, and as a succession of such transactions would have sent him to a better world, by starvation, it was not safe to accept the compliment seriously.

"Yes, it's a wicked world, McGrath; but the wickedness is not all on one side. There's a little left for the market-gardeners. What about Father Hanlon's plants?"

"Do ye think, yere rivrence, Father Hanlon is responsible for all the childhre he christens out of Haggis Alley? They're good enough when he christens 'em, God bless 'em, but nothin' could grow up good in that hole. And, shure, it's the same wid thim other flowers. Don't ye know yereself, yere rivrence, that Father Hanlon can't get a dacent blade of grass to grow, barrin' he grows it undher a tumbler? But there's thim that thinks flowers 'll grow in a chimbley!"

"You'll be calling my garden a chimney next."

"Not if thim plants grow, yere rivrence," with a humorous twinkle.

Father Quin was rather tickled by Barney's so turning the tables as to put the garden and not the plants upon trial.

"Well, you'll have no fault to find with Mr Mullen's garden, anyway, McGrath. You'd better call to-day, and say I sent you."

"I will, yere rivrence, and thank ye kindly for spakein' a good wurd for me."

It will be seen that Barney was not only a greengrocer in a small way, but also in a small way a middle man between the nurseryman and the public. The last was not a paying trade, but Barney's passionate love of flowers made him stick to it at a loss which to him was sometimes considerable. And now the probability of getting Mr. Mullen's custom encouraged a wild dream which had been in his head since he became a teetotaller. His one chance of keeping the pledge, he felt, lay in his escape from Knacker's Alley and its associations, and in his finding employment for his evenings. If only he could get a bit of a garden, such as he had once in the old country, it would be the saving and the making of him, he thought. He must see Miss Masters and ask her about investing his money in this way. No sooner, then, had Father Quin left him than, with Irish impulsiveness, he turned the "baste" round and made for the Grange.

Barney's recourse to his guardian angel involved the guardian angel's recourse to George; and in this way Barney's fortunes became entangled with those of our hero and heroine, and his plans came to clash with George's. For George, now realising fully the danger of seeing much more of Mabel, had resolved to keep as clear of her as he could. Of what force were his virtuous resolutions, however, in the face of this business-like despatch?

"DEAR MR. KNEESHAW,—Could you kindly call any morning, between eleven and one, when you have a minute or two to spare? I am really ashamed to have to trouble you again, but Bayard"—George's satirical name for Barney—"Bayard has put the money subscribed for him into my hands, and I have no idea what to do with it. I advised him to take it to you, but he didn't seem to like troubling either you or his own clergyman with it, though he consented to my asking your advice about investing it. I'm afraid you'll think the kindness you have shown in taking so much trouble already in the matter a poor excuse for putting you to more; but it's the only one I have to offer.

"Believe me, truly yours,

"MABEL MASTERS."

Now there are two things about this letter that every young lady will disapprove of. First, that it was written at all, and secondly the style in which it is written. It was certainly not young-ladylike either to write it at all or to write in that style. It is such a letter as the late lamented Miss Murdoch might appropriately have written; and this, which is the worst thing, is also the best thing, that can be said for it, since the motherless Mabel had been educated by that grim spinster, to whom the proper pronunciation of the French vowel U and the formation of a literary style anything but feminine, had seemed of much more importance than the cultivation of conventional proprieties.

George was not only enough in love to think the letter all that it should be, but he was so fond (the reader may take the word in either its old or new sense, according to his own age) as to put it among his treasures, and to hurry off towards the Grange long before the earliest hour mentioned in it. In fact, he had what seemed an age to hover about the house, like a bird about its nest, before his watch told him it was time to ring the bell. Where now was his stoic resolution? It was not in all his thoughts. The very mood of mind in which it was formed was dim as a dream to him. The feeling he thought he had securely dammed had burst the barrier, and now with accumulated force swept all before it. The reader was not prepared for such an outburst? George himself was not prepared for it. Like the fisherman in the *Arabian Nights*, he is amazed to see the power which one moment seemed sealed securely in its phial, tower the next moment to the sky, and fill the earth with its shadow.

The change in George was so marked that even the self-absorbed Miss Masters might have noticed it, if she had been present. As for Mabel, who was the quickest observer in Wefton, she remarked it in a moment. She was not now absorbed with anxiety about Barney, and she took in, therefore, indications that escaped her before, and which besides were now so much more pronounced. It is astonishing how instinctively girls, even children, and even those who, like Mabel, have not a particle of vanity in their nature, recognise the most suppressed admiration. About George's admiration, however, there was no mistake. He had lost all his cynicism and self-possession, and become timid, deferential, even reverential. He was—if the ladies will forgive a most unromantic metaphor—like a crab which has shed its shell, and which, from being the most self-reliant and aggressive of creatures, suddenly becomes meek, self-distrustful, and retiring. And what was the effect of his evident infatuation on Mabel? It may be taken as certain that a young lady rather despises a man for adoration, which she does not in some degree reciprocate—a remark, by the way, which is stolen from Bacon. Mabel did not despise George. His admiration had the effect of precipitating a feeling which had before floated in vague solution in her mind, indefinite and unrecognised, but which now took the solid shape of liking. It is not worth while giving what passed between them at this interview. It had as much to do with what was passing in their minds as the sighing of the wind through the telegraph wires has to do with the electric messages flying along them. As for Barney's business, it was a matter of such moment that George would have to think over it, and consult experts, and come again to-morrow to tell Mabel the result. Next day it was found that there were two or three other things to be inquired about and reported on, and even when those were decided, it was necessary for Mabel to see Bayard and get his consent, and transmit it at a fourth interview to George. Barney, however, saved Mabel the trouble of sending for him by turn-

ing up with his own scheme for the investment of his fortune. This, again, must be communicated to George. But how? Certainly not by letter now; from which it will be seen that Mabel was in a fair way of falling in love. She succeeded in inducing Barney to call himself upon George, and lay the matter before him.

CHAPTER XI.

REPARATION.

MEANWHILE, Mr. Pickles was forging another link in the chain by which George was being bound. The chairman of one of his local committees, Mr. Jonas Barraclough, brought him an important report one evening. Mr. Barraclough was a pompous and ponderous man, who would give importance to any report. He had no doubt that Mr. Pickles owed his seat to Mr. Jonas Barraclough's influence, and that Mr. Jonas Barraclough owed his influence to his oratory. His idea of oratory was shortly this—never to use one word, or a word of one syllable, where three words or a trisyllabic word would serve the same purpose. He would, so to speak, change a sovereign into two hundred and forty pence, and imagine that its value increased with its bulk. Mr. Barraclough was shown into a room set specially apart by Mr. Pickles for the reception of his constituents. Its walls were adorned with plans or pictures of the schools, hospitals, churches, or chapels he had helped to build, and with photographs of his local committees in groups, and portraits of their respective chairmen. There were also two emblazoned and, indeed, blazing addresses hung at either side of a magnificent portrait in oils of the gentleman to whom they were presented—Josiah Pickles, Esq., M.P.—while on each side of the fireplace were bookcases stored with blue books, reports, etc., relieved by the light literature of the quarterlies.

In this reception-room Mr. Barraclough was left some time alone, admiring the counterfeit presentment of himself; for it was a rule with Mr. Pickles to allow his constituents time to digest the significance of these ornaments, that their imagination might thereby be helped to a conception of the greatness and goodness of their representative. The *genius loci*, however, did not affect Mr. Barraclough, in part because he was fascinated by his own portrait, and in part because there was no room in his mind to take in any other greatness and goodness than his own. He was still admiring his portrait, with his head a good deal on one side, when Mr. Pickles at last appeared.

"How do you do, Mr. Barraclough? Take a seat, sir; take a seat," said Mr. Pickles, in his sharp and decisive manner.

"Thank you, Mr. Pickles, sir," replied Mr. Barraclough, slowly seating himself, and proceeding in a very measured and impressive manner

to answer the question "How do you do?" as a question of the utmost importance.

"I am tolerably well, sir. I had a bad cold last week, and my chest seemed, I may say, choked with phlegm. But I expectorated a good deal; I always expectorate when I have a bad cold, sir," pausing and looking at Mr. Pickles with the evident expectation of some expression of surprise, or at least of interest, which extracted from Mr. Pickles, "Oh, indeed?"

"Yes, sir; I always expectorate a good deal when I have a bad cold. I think, Mr. Pickles," he continued, with the manner of a man who was venturing on a daring hypothesis, "it to some extent relieves the lungs of the accumulated phlegm. But, sir, I am better now, a good deal better. In fact, I may say quite well, thank you."

"I am glad you are, Mr. Barraclough."

"So am I, sir; so am I," heartily, as if his assent must be a gratifying surprise to Mr. Pickles. "If I had not been quite well I should hardly have ventured out so late to-night, Mr. Pickles, though I have come on important business; I may say on business of considerable importance."

"Political business, Mr. Barraclough?"

"Well, sir, looking at it from the point of view of politics, you might call it political business. It is so far political business, sir, as it concerns the character of public men—of personages of some political importance and prominence."

"Ah," said Mr. Pickles vaguely. Mr. Barraclough's style was more intolerable to him than to most men, as being the very opposite of his own short, sharp, and decisive manner; but he had to pay Mr. Barraclough's claims upon him as graciously as any other extortionate election charges.

"You will not be unaware, Mr. Pickles," Mr. Barraclough resumed, "that an accident, not unattended with serious consequences, happened to your son, sir, Mr. Clarence Pickles, a short time ago." Here Mr. Barraclough paused to make quite sure that the father had heard of his son's hairbreadth escape from death.

"Yes?" said Mr. Pickles, with some impatience.

"An account of that accident, as I understand, sir—I may have been misinformed, and I am subject to correction, if I am wrong—but, as I was given to understand, an account of that accident was furnished by Mr. Clarence Pickles himself to the representative of the reporting department of our principal local journal, the *Wefton Witness*."

"Yes," assented Mr. Pickles, with a little more interest.

"In that account it is stated— Stay, I have the copy of the journal in my pocket," said Mr. Barraclough, clearing his throat, and drawing from his pocket an uncleanly copy of the *Wefton Witness*, in which it took him some time to find, first the paragraph and then that part of the paragraph he wanted: "'The high-spirited animal . . . Here the groom . . . but Mr. Pickles'—ah, this is the part of the paragraph to which I would

invite your most particular attention, Mr. Pickles: 'But Mr. Pickles fortunately stuck to his post, though he could not guide the panic-stricken animal so as to prevent its knocking down the Rev. Mr. Kneeshaw, one of the curates of the parish church, who, however, we are happy to say, escaped without serious injury. As the shaft struck the reverend gentleman, the horse stumbled and came down within a few yards of the cutting, into which, in all human probability, it must have plunged, but for this timely and most providential accident.' 'Most providential accident,' repeated Mr. Barraclough, folding up and returning the paper to his pocket. "This paragraph, Mr. Pickles, as I understand it, attributes Mr. Kneeshaw's being in the way and being knocked down to chance, sir—to accident pure and simple?"

"Certainly, Mr. Barraclough."

"Would you believe it, then, sir," said Mr. Barraclough, stooping forward with a hand on each knee, and speaking in a low, slow, and awed voice—"Would you believe it, then, sir, that this very day I was contradicted flatly, to my face, in our club-room, when I repeated the statement of that paragraph word for word, and, I may say, verbatim;" and Mr. Barraclough drew himself back in his chair and looked to see the horror in his own face reflected in that of Mr. Pickles. Mr. Pickles, however, being as Yorkshire as Mr. Barraclough in looking at things exclusively from his own point of view, could not see wherein the atrocity lay.

"Contradicted! On what point, Mr. Barraclough?"

"On what point, sir?" asked Mr. Barraclough, with some vexation in his tone at Mr. Pickles' insensibility to the main insult of the contradiction, beside which the details were nothing. "On the point, sir, of Mr. Kneeshaw's being accidentally, I may say fortuitously, in the way. They said, sir—and it was not one or two, but the greater number of the members asserted it, and maintained it in the teeth of my deliberate statement to the contrary—they said that Mr. Kneeshaw was safe on the plank bridge, but hearing the tumult, and looking round, and seeing the imminent peril and—and danger of your son, he hurried back and was knocked down in trying to catch the reins and arrest the horse. And they said, sir, that at least thirty or forty people saw him running back from the bridge and catching at the reins; and they said, sir, that Mr. Clarence Pickles must have seen it himself, and known that his statement to the representative of our local journal was, I may say, misleading and inaccurate, and indeed inexact."

"Is this a general impression?" asked Mr. Pickles, beginning now to see the justice of Mr. Barraclough's indignation.

"It is the general impression, sir, of our club, which is supposed to represent—whether justly or unjustly I will not presume to say—to represent the Liberal opinion of the West Ward."

While Mr. Pickles, without concerning himself in the least with the truth or falsehood of the report, was casting about in his mind for the

best means of neutralising its probable effect upon the approaching elections, Mr. Barraclough, who had, to say the truth, been not only contradicted, but browbeaten rather brutally, by those members of the club who were impatient of both him and Mr. Pickles, was of course thinking chiefly of his own credit.

"I must see to this, Mr. Barraclough ; thank you for bringing it to my notice," said Mr. Pickles, who equally, of course, was thinking, and imagined that Mr. Barraclough was thinking, only of *his* (Mr. Pickles') credit. "What would you suggest as best to be done?"

"I should suggest, sir, that a letter under the hand of Mr. Clarence Pickles and countersigned by yourself should be written and addressed to me, maintaining the substantial and literal and, I may say, general accuracy of my statement, which letter should be posted up in the club-room and communicated to the local journals."

"H'm," said Mr. Pickles dubiously. "I shall see my son about it, Mr. Barraclough, and let you know the result."

"As you please, sir, as you please," replied Mr. Barraclough, somewhat huffed. "You will keep in mind, Mr. Pickles, sir, that I have endorsed that statement, and that my credit in the club and in the town is at stake, sir ; is, I may say, bound up and involved and implicated in the truth of that statement, and in its bonâ-fideness. That is a consideration, sir, that you will not overlook in your decision upon the matter. I wish you good evening, Mr. Pickles ; good evening, sir," rising with much majesty, and taking a rather stiff leave of the member.

"Good evening, Mr. Barraclough ; I shall write you the result," said Mr. Pickles, as he rang to have his guest shown out.

Upon Mr. Barraclough's departure Mr. Pickles rejoined Clarence, who was enjoying his wine after dinner. "Clarence, was Kneeshaw trying to stop your horse when he was knocked down?"

"Can't say, I'm sure," drawled Clarence, flushing slightly.

"But you did say to that reporting fellow."

"I said what I thought I saw ; but I wasn't looking at the thing with my hands in my pockets, you know. I wasn't on the look out for Mr. Kneeshaw's safety, I can assure you."

"It will be a confounded awkward business to settle, I can tell you," said Josiah, in a tone of irritation.

"Has the fellow been making a claim on you?"

"Who? Kneeshaw? No ; but they're making a story out of it for the elections."

"They can't make much out of it, I should say."

"They can make this out of it, that you told a lie to shirk a debt. I don't say so, but they'll say it."

"It's very good of you not to say it," sneered Clarence, stung into what for him was an unusually sharp answer. But steel had no chance against Josiah's bludgeon.

"I don't say it, because I didn't see the accident. But those who saw

it say it," said the father, pushing his chair away impatiently as he rose to stand with his back to the fire. Opposition of any kind and from any one was intolerable to Josiah, even when he was in good humour. He was very much out of humour to-night for many reasons, and was not sorry that his son should have the benefit of his mood. He saw in a moment, from Clarence's manner, that for some reason he had given to the reporter a version of the accident which he knew to be untrue, and which, moreover, was not only a crime, but a blunder that would tell in the elections. Clarence, being dependent upon his father, had not such silly ideas of honour as to resent a hasty word at the cost of a quarter's allowance.

"They may say what they like. I can only say what I saw," he said sulkily.

"Well, you have said it now, and we can only make the best of it," said the father taking the falsehood as much for granted as if his son had admitted it. It was very irritating, but Clarence didn't care to dispute the matter knowing that nothing but further irritation would come of further controversy.

"Who is this Kneeshaw? He's a curate, isn't he?" asked Josiah, with a dim remembrance of the paragraph in the *Witness*.

"Yes, he's a curate. One of Dr. Clancy's curates."

"It wouldn't do to send him a cheque," mused Josiah, more to himself than to his son. "He'd take it fast enough, I daresay, but he wouldn't care to have it known that he took it. We must set ourselves right with the public. One of Clancy's curates? I'll tell you what, I'll give him St. George's. It will kill two birds with one stone, for Clancy will take it as a compliment to himself."

"St. George's isn't yours to give, is it?" growled Clarence sulkily, pleased to pick this hole in the plan.

"If I pay the piper I shall call the tune. I've given 2,000*l.* towards it already, and they were at me yesterday for 1,500*l.* more to finish it. I shall give it if they put my man in; not otherwise. I should have had to give another 1,000*l.* whether or no, so it will cost me only 500*l.*"

"Who are the trustees?"

"There's Gledhill, Dearden, Mills, Matchlock, and myself; but, except Matchlock, not one of them has given 1,000*l.* towards it."

"Matchlock's daughter is married to a parson."

"Let him give the other 1,500*l.* then. He'll be glad to have his 1,000*l.* back in his pocket again, and more besides he would be glad to know it was there. Matchlock is at the far end, I can tell you."

"If you are only one of five, you will not get the credit of giving it, either with Kneeshaw or anyone else."

"I shall take credit for it if I give it. You may be sure of that." As this was certain as the sunlight, Clarence was silenced. He was naturally not in favour of an arrangement which meant a frank public confession of the falsehood of his version of the accident.

"What are *you* going to do about it?" asked Josiah sharply, after a pause.

"About what?"

"About this—ah—mistaken account you gave of the thing."

"I don't know that it was mistaken, and I don't believe it was either."

"Barraclough says there are thirty or forty who saw it. Shall I have them up before you?" sneered Josiah.

"It's this confounded election," retorted Clarence. "They'd say anything for sixpence."

"Look here, Clarence; 'this confounded election,' as you call it, has cost me so much that I don't care to throw away 1,000*l.*, or 500*l.*, for nothing. If the thing happened as you say, you can get four or five witnesses—they're cheap at sixpence a head, you know—to support your statement, and I shall be glad to keep my money in my pocket. But if not, you'll either write to the *Witness* to say that you were mistaken, or you'll have 50*l.* a quarter docked from your allowance till the 500*l.* is paid off."

Josiah, having delivered his ultimatum, advanced to the table, filled and drank a glass of sherry, looking defiantly at Clarence the while. Clarence muttered something he took care should be inaudible, leisurely chose a cigar from its case, sauntered to the window, and thence to the lawn. Josiah looked after him with an unexpected expression of satisfaction. In the first place, Clarence's supercilious airs were his father's highest ideal of a gentlemanly manner, and made up to him in great measure for his son's lack of brains and energy; and in the second place, Josiah felt as certain of the appearance of the required letter in the *Witness* as if he had seen it there. And, indeed, as a quarter's allowance was now nearly due, the following letter appeared in that print before the close of the week:—

"SIR,—In your issue of the 3rd inst. there is an account of an accident which happened to me through the running away of my horse, which is in one particular inaccurate. It states that the Rev. Mr. Kneeshaw was *accidentally* knocked down; but I find upon inquiry that he was knocked down in attempting to stop my horse. I am glad to make through your columns this public acknowledgment of the service the Rev. Mr. Kneeshaw rendered me on that occasion.

"I am, sir, yours, etc.,

"CLARENCE PICKLES.

"To the Editor of the *Wefton Witness*."

This letter, which might have been written by the Prince of Wales in acknowledgment of a bouquet presented by the daughter of a loyal mayor, was inserted in the *Witness*, with the addition of this curt editorial note:—

"The account whose accuracy Mr. Clarence Pickles now questions was given to our reporter by Mr. Clarence Pickles himself."

This editorial comment, which was interpreted in *Wefton* to express the disgust of the Liberals with the political tergiversation of their member, really expressed the disgust of Mr. King, the editor of the *Witness*, at being uninvited to the luncheon with which the Pickles' Working Man's Institute was about to be opened. It was, in fact, the invidious invitations to this lunch which put Josiah into the bad temper we found him in at the opening of this chapter. As it was to be a very grand affair, everyone who was anyone expected an invitation; but since not more than one tenth of such expectants could by any possibility be accommodated in the building, Josiah, like the French Prince, was compelled to make ten malcontents and one ingrate at each card issued. Many of these malcontents had bites or stings of their own, which they used with as little scruple as the editor of the *Witness*, and Josiah, therefore, had a rather harassed time of it just now, especially at the hands of disaffected and affronted Liberals. But the apostasy of the *Wefton Witness*, which once stood staunchly by him through good and evil report, was a heavy blow and great discouragement. The day before Clarence's letter appeared, it had spoken of their member as "a political Procrustes who changed, like the chameleon, his colour with his position, and mangled and mutilated the principles he professed to fit the length of his own foot." This mysterious sentence, in which the writer seemed to have rolled into one Proteus, Procrustes, and Paddy the Piper, was not the less terrible from being unintelligible, and in the very next issue appeared the curt and cutting comment on Clarence's note. The defection of the *Witness* brought to a head a resolution which had been some time maturing in Josiah's mind. He had been long enough uncomfortably astride, like a circus rider, on two horses; henceforth he would stick to one and stand to win on the Tory steed. He would take the first public opportunity of frankly, formally, and finally avowing his adhesion to "those good old Conservative principles which reconciled progress with stability and order with freedom, making our constitution the envy of those military despotisms which transformed countries into camps and nations into armies, and making her also the model and the mother, or, if not the mother, at least the foster-mother of all constitutional governments throughout the world." We give by anticipation the concluding words, as reported by the *Witness*, of Josiah's speech at the luncheon, by which he broke down his bridges and burned his boats, and finally and for ever severed himself from the Liberal party.

Josiah, having made his mind up to the formal desertion of the party which returned him, had to consider how best to make to himself friends of the mammon of unrighteousness and ensure his welcome into the enemy's camp. And his first thought was, of course, the Church. Josiah had been a chapelman in the days of his obscurity, but on achieving great-

ness he took to churchgoing, as he took to late dinners, as being respectable. He had hitherto also subscribed to Church objects, rather grudgingly and of necessity, perhaps, than as a cheerful giver, but still he did subscribe, and sometimes handsomely; now, however, he would serve Baal much. And, as his first service, he would complete St. George's Church—of course on the condition that he was allowed to make the first appointment.

Josiah, having made his mind up on any matter, was not the man to lose a moment in moving in it. He was present at the next meeting of the trustees, laid his offer and the condition of his offer before them in his usual ungracious take-it-or-leave-it manner, and mentioned incidentally Mr. Kneeshaw's name as that of his nominee. Now Mr. Gledhill, who, as taking the most active interest in the building of the church, was listened to with most deference by his co-trustees, happened to know a good deal about George and about his kindness to the poor, and his recommendation smoothed down the opposition—urged upon the ground of Mr. Kneeshaw's youth—which Josiah's rasping manner aroused. Even Mr. Matchlock, whose interested opposition Clarence had anticipated, made no serious objection, as his son-in-law had already a living of more value than St. George's. Josiah, when his terms were accepted, condescended to explain the reason of his choice of so young a man as Mr. Kneeshaw, since he wished it to be as widely known as possible that he acknowledged this great debt of his son's life to him; and the explanation reconciled even Mr. Dearden to an appointment to which he had given at first a rather sullen adhesion. As for Mr. Mills, no one seemed to think his consent necessary.

"DEAR SIR,—I have only just learned the obligation I am under to you for saving my son's life. I have great pleasure in offering you the living of St. George's of the probable value of 700*l.* per annum, as I have succeeded in obtaining the first presentation of it. I have undertaken to complete the church at an estimated cost of 1,500*l.*, and hope to have it finished in a month.

"I am, dear sir, faithfully yours,

"JOSIAH PICKLES."

The letter read rather like a balance-sheet, but Josiah could do nothing graciously. George, however, was in no mood to be critical when he received it. He opened it after an almost sleepless night of struggle with himself, in which his conscience at last conquered, and the firstfruits of its victory was to be the refusal of this living. So he sat down at once to his desk and wrote the following reply:—

"DEAR SIR,—I very much regret to have to decline your kind offer of St. George's, though the promotion is far beyond my expectations or deserts, and a very disproportionate reward for the service I did your son. I only did what anyone else would have done in my place, and

what I should have done for anyone else. I hope you will not think me ungrateful because I am compelled to decline your generous offer.

"Believe me, dear sir, faithfully yours,

"GEORGE B. KNEESHAW."

CHAPTER XII.

DRIFTING.

GEORGE, having written and addressed his letter, hurried off to post it at once. He wasn't sure of himself. He had fought the night through against the thought of Mabel, to keep her image as much as he could in the background, for to give up the ministry meant giving up all hope of her. And he must give up the ministry. What had at last decided him? Yesterday was a great Christian festival commemorating an event which he did not quite absolutely disbelieve, but in which his faith was certainly not firm enough to preach it to others. Yet he must preach it, and preach it as a thing certain as the sunrise. He did so preach it, and the preparation of the sermon and the preaching of it, and the sense of self-degradation which overcame him as he descended the steps of the pulpit, forced him to feel the falsehood of his position as he had never felt it before. The fact was, though he was unconscious of it, he was in a much falser position than when last he looked his faith fairly in the face. Our minds are never at a standstill on subjects in which we are interested, try as we will to shelve them. They are always more or less at work upon such subjects through conscious or unconscious cerebration, and when we come after an interval to take our bearings with respect to them, we are certain to have drifted to a new standpoint. Since George had taken his bearings, his mind had in this way drifted out to sea much farther than he had any notion of, and now he was horrified to find himself so far from shore. Hence his sleepless night and the struggle with his conscience, made more desperate by Mabel's being ranged on the enemy's side. He had conquered, however, or thought that he had conquered, and this offer of a living seemed to come in the nick of time rather to strengthen than shake his resolution. Everyone knows how a new resolution, like a young soldier, longs for action, and is impatient to translate its ardour into some definite form; and George welcomed Mr. Pickles' offer for the opportunity it gave of realising his resolution. Accordingly, the writing of the refusal of the living was a relief to his mind as giving shape and substance to his determination, and being a definite and decided step in the right direction. But, beside and behind this reason for his eagerness to write and post his refusal at once, lurked distrust of himself and of his power to give up all chance of Mabel. In fact, this brave dash was little more than masked cowardice, and this prompt decision was but indecision in

disguise. He must commit himself at once and once for all, or the sight of Mabel, or the mere thought of her, if he allowed

Th' idea of her life to sweetly creep
Into his study of imagination,

might overpower his conscience. Hence his hurry to post the decisive letter.

As he opened the gate of the little garden between his lodgings and the road, a waggonette drove up and stopped at it. In it were Squire, four other convalescent little ones, and Archer Lawley.

"Halloa!" cried Lawley, "just in time."

"In time for what?"

"To come with us."

"Where?"

"Didn't you get my letter?"

"Letter? No."

"By Jove! that accounts for it. She couldn't have got it either."

"Who?" asked George, bewildered.

"Mary Ann," said Lawley, disregarding George's question, and turning back to address the eldest of the children, "didn't you post those letters?"

"Yes, sir."

"Where?"

"At the station, sir."

"It's very odd," mused Lawley, pulling his moustache with a perplexed air.

"Very," answered George drily.

"I wrote to you on Thursday," Lawley explained, "asking you to join us to-day, but telling you not to trouble to answer if you could come; and by the same post I invited Miss Masters and her niece, as Squire was so anxious to see her, but got no reply. Are you sure you posted the letters, Mary Ann?"

"Yes, sir," answered the child, on the brink of tears.

Lawley, after a moment's meditation, exclaimed, in a tone of mortification, "Of course! Where did you post them, Mary Ann?"

"I put them into the big wooden money-box," said the child, now whimpering.

"I thought so! She posted them in the box for newspapers for the workhouse. What an ass I was not to tell her where to put them, for the second time I've been played that trick. It can't be helped now. Don't cry, little woman, it was my fault," he said soothingly, patting the penitent Mary Ann on the cheek. "We must go without them, I suppose."

At this doleful news Squire also lifted up his voice and wept.

"This is a nice beginning of a treat, isn't it?" to George.—"Never

mind, Squire, you shall see her, if she's in. We shall call there, at any rate. In with you, Kneeshaw."

"I don't think I can go;" in no very decided tone, however.

"Why, what have you got to do?"

George couldn't say he had anything particular to do, and Lawley simply took him impatiently by the arm and shoved him up the steps, while Squire, to whom this second disappointment would have been crushing, looked so wistfully into his face that George's faint resistance gave way at once.

"The Grange, Bradford Road," cried Lawley to the driver, as he jumped in after George. "If you hadn't come I couldn't have faced them, Kneeshaw. I'm not a ladies' man, you know."

When George read the offer of the living that morning, the second person he thought of was Archer Lawley. He felt it to be a kind of treason to their friendship not to take him into counsel, or at least into confidence, before writing his refusal, but he feared at once the delay and himself and his friend's adverse advice. Now, however, he had no choice but to hand Lawley Mr. Pickles' letter. Lawley, when he had read it, put his hand on George's shoulder with a demonstrativeness unusual with him.

"My dear fellow, I congratulate you with all my heart!"

"But I have refused it."

"What!" and then, after a moment's pause he referred to the letter.

"Why, you only got the offer this morning! You can't have refused it yet."

George held up the answer. Lawley took it, looked at the address, and coolly put it into his pocket.

"You can't have considered the matter for five minutes," he said. "It's not a thing to be refused or accepted like an invitation to dinner. A day is little enough to think over it, especially if you are inclined to refuse it. Anyhow, your letter won't reach Mr. Pickles sooner by being posted twelve hours before the box closes."

George submitted meekly, with a sense that his childish haste deserved a child's treatment.

"I must give the whole thing up, Lawley," he said despondently.

"Well, we shall have plenty of time to talk it over to-day when we get to ourselves. It's not likely the ladies will come on so short an invitation."

"Where are we going?"

"To the moors. Doctor says a day there will do the children more good than a week at home. Besides, it's the only place that won't swarm to-day."

"What on earth made you choose to-day of all days in the year?"

"The MacGucken's off," whispered Lawley, that the children might not hear. "Gone to her sister's. Couldn't have gone without her if she'd been at home, you know; and I wanted Squire to see Miss Masters. Here we are. Shall we take Squire in with us?"

George looked at his watch before he answered to see if Miss Masters was due downstairs yet, and finding that she was, thought it best to be cautious. "Let us see if they'll join us first. Don't say anything about the children to the aunt," he added, as they walked up the steps together. "In fact, don't say anything to her at all. Leave her to me, while you explain the matter to Miss Mabel."

Lawley nodded submissively. Where ladies were concerned he at once resigned the command he assumed on all other occasions. All the same, he didn't like the task of explaining the business to that young woman whose great eyes seemed to look straight through him. Fortunately they found only Mabel in the drawing-room, and George therefore was free to help him out in his explanations.

"It's very good of you, Mr. Lawley," said Mabel in a subdued tone, as if she was addressing a bishop. She had quite made up her mind that he was at once a sage and saint. "And I should so much like to go, but—— I shall go and ask my aunt about it, if you'll excuse me."

Her aunt, however, saved her the trouble by appearing at this moment. Lawley, upon being introduced to her, was blundering out the explanations which George forewarned him against giving, when that diplomatist intervened and expatiated upon the exquisite beauty of the moors, which he was amazed Miss Masters had not yet seen and painted. If she could spare an hour or two to-day to accompany them he could assure her she could find no better guide than Mr. Lawley, who knew all the lovely bits. It was unnecessary to say another word to convince Miss Masters that the expedition was got up exclusively for her. She was profuse in her acknowledgments to the embarrassed Mr. Lawley, and hurried off to get herself and her sketching materials ready.

"Mabel, my dear," she turned to say as she reached the door, "you needn't wait lunch for me. I shall take a biscuit and a glass of sherry before I start."

"But who's to chaperon you, Aunt? Mr. Lawley has been good enough to ask me, too."

"It really is too good of you, Mr. Lawley," said Miss Masters, highly flattered by this additional mark of his consideration. "I should like to have Mabel with me very much: she has never had any drawing-lessons worth speaking of. Come, my dear, we mustn't keep the carriage waiting."

"What are we to do about the children?" asked George, when they had left the room.

"How?"

"You see she hates poor people and she hates children, so poor children will be doubly abominable. Would you mind adopting them just for to-day?" urged George persuasively. Lawley acknowledged this ghastly joke with a grin, little thinking that George contemplated carrying it out. "It was well your invitation miscarried," continued George; "she'd never have accepted it if put in your way."

"It would have been the best way after all," retorted Lawley. "We

shall have nothing but bother trying to keep up your humbug. You're a nice fellow to set up a conscience!"

Hereupon Mabel re-entered for a moment to say that she was going down to speak to Squire. The truth was she thought it as well to spare her aunt the shock of seeing her meeting with the child. When Miss Masters at length appeared, George took charge of her camp-stool, portfolio, etc., gave her his arm, and, as they were going together down the stairs, mentioned casually that there were five little children of the party. "Mr. Lawley's children, we call them," he explained, mumbling the last three words rather indistinctly. Certainly George had little right to set up a conscience.

Miss Masters, seated in the waggonette, took an amazed survey of the five weazened creatures ranged in a row on the opposite side. One had crutches, another had an arm in a sling, a third had one side of her face and neck badly burned, the fourth was deformed, and the fifth worn to a shadow. From them her eyes glanced with a deeper pity to their unfortunate father. Of their mother, whether she was dead or alive (she saw no crape on Mr. Lawley's sleeve), she could not help having hard thoughts. Only through gross carelessness could it be possible that so many horrible accidents should happen in a single family. It was evident their father was not in fault, for his taking such spectacles out to ride with him testified to his kindness of heart, of which, indeed, his invitation to herself spoke still more eloquently. He must be watching anxiously the impression they made upon her—the refined and artistic Miss Masters. She mustn't let him see how unfavourable it was. Indeed, common politeness, to say nothing of gratitude, demanded that she should find some redeeming feature somewhere. But where? She looked in despair from face to face and figure to figure. At last she fixed on Squire as the least horrible of the five. "Don't you think, my dear," she said, turning to Mabel, who was seated beside Squire, with his hand in hers, "there's a strong likeness about the eyes?" looking, with her head on one side, first at Squire and then at Lawley.

Mabel in a moment saw her aunt's mistake and coloured up to the very roots of her hair. "They are not brother and sister," she said with great presence of mind, affecting to think that her aunt saw some likeness between Squire and his next neighbour, Mary Ann. "Mercy!" thought Miss Masters. "Two families! Was ever a man so unlucky as to marry two such women!"

Meantime George, seeing Mabel's misery, repented bitterly of his foolish joke. "We call them Mr. Lawley's children, Miss Masters, for he turns his vicarage into a convalescent hospital for the children of the poor when they are recovering from illness."

This announcement acted like an electric shock upon Miss Masters. She lost all control over herself, started up, poked the driver in the back with her umbrella, while she screamed to him to stop. She had the most morbid horror of infection.

"What is it, Aunt?" asked Mabel, thoroughly alarmed.

"I don't know what it is—scarlatina, perhaps, or small-pox. Mr. Lawley, I hope you'll excuse us; it's very kind of you, but——. Mabel, let go that child's hand!"

"She can't catch compound fracture of the leg," growled Lawley, who forgot his shyness in his horror of a scene. "There's no infection to fear, Miss Masters.—A broken arm, a broken leg, a burn, curvature of the spine, and general debility," ticking off his patients' complaints in a very business-like manner. "I'm sorry you should think I'd trap you into a fever hospital."

George was amazed at Lawley's self-assertion; Mabel was utterly and miserably ashamed; while Miss Masters herself, being reassured and rebuked by Lawley's words and manner, was shocked at her hysterical outburst—which, indeed, only an insane terror of infection could have provoked from her—and became meekly apologetic. In explanation of her panic she told rather a rambling story of her childhood about a little girl who came to their house to sell mushrooms, and her brother Henry kicked over her basket, and their mother made him gather up the mushrooms and put them back, and both the little girl and her brother caught scarlatina at the same time, and the little girl died. Hence she might well dread infection ever since.

"The dog it was that died," muttered Lawley, thinking the allusion would be intelligible only to George.

"Mr. Lawley thinks, Aunt, that the little girl caught the fever from my father," said Mabel, looking over archly at Mr. Lawley. It didn't need much reading or readiness so to translate Lawley's quotation, but it needed more of both than that gentleman expected from a young lady, and he was, therefore, rather taken aback. As for Miss Masters, it was some seconds before she could take in this preposterous view of the case. She considered infection to be, like the poor-rate, a tax which the lower orders imposed on the upper.

"We never had such a thing in our family before," she said with some stiffness.

On the whole, however, Miss Masters was as amiable as could be expected under the circumstances. She was really ashamed of her outbreak, and expressed her penitence by trying to make herself even more agreeable than usual. In this way George and Mabel were again thrown together by fate. If Lawley's invitation had been properly posted, or if Miss Masters had known that morning the real nature of the pleasure party she was asked to join, she would certainly have declined. As it was, she was not only there, but gracious, thanks to this little storm. Yet at the bottom of her heart—as was only to be expected in so vain a person—she was irritated less with herself than with Mr. Lawley, as the cause, however indirect or innocent, of her mortification.

Mabel during the drive devoted herself to Mr. Lawley exclusively, in part to try to do away the impression of her aunt's ungracious out-

burst, and in part for another reason. We do not say she was in love with George, or that she considered George in love with her; we say only that she could neither look at him nor speak to him with the frank unconsciousness and freedom from self-consciousness with which she would look at or speak to anyone else in the world. As for George, while affecting to listen to Miss Masters, he had eyes and ears only for Mabel. She never looked so lovely or talked so brightly, a sweet and secret excitement speaking through her eyes and thoughts. Even that gnarled old cynic Lawley was fain to confess her power. In speaking afterwards to George on one of his favourite topics—the general muddle of things in the world, in which no one could find either clue or coherence—he burst out with “There’s that Miss Masters! She might have been anything, and she’s a girl!” It was not an effective *argumentum ad hominem*, as George was quite satisfied with Nature’s ordering in this individual instance; but it expressed pithily Lawley’s opinion at once of the sex in general, and of Mabel in particular. The fact was, that when Lawley could be got to converse with a woman at all, he conversed with her as if she was a very young man; and a conversation of this kind revealed incidentally that Mabel had read and thought about what—for a girl—was an immense and amazing range of subjects. And this range of thought and reading seemed to Lawley all the more prodigious in a girl, not merely because in every case it came out incidentally and in answer to his lead, but also because in every case it was submitted to his superior judgment with a deference that was unfeigned, and therefore flattering to masculine vanity. Without this deference, twice her accomplishments would not have had half the effect on any man, not even Lawley. Mabel herself, we may say, was much more inclined to be ashamed than proud of her acquisitions, since they were held by the Roxby School to be as unfeminine as whistling or smoking.

“What! have you read that, too?” asked Lawley, in reference to some metaphysical work.

“I have repeated it, like a phonograph. It’s one of the books I have read aloud to my father, Mr. Lawley; but I hope you won’t suspect me of understanding it. I couldn’t pronounce half the words properly.”

“It’s waste of time reading such stuff,” said Lawley, now perfectly at his ease and speaking precisely as he would speak to George, but seeming to look rather through Mabel than at her. “Metaphysics are just like eddies in a river, they whirl you round and round till you are dizzy, and don’t advance you a yard.”

“I’ll answer for the dizziness; but at least they do me the good of making me feel how stupid I am.”

“Stupid! It’s the book that’s stupid. You’re not stupid, and you don’t think yourself stupid either,” he added, in the sudden fear that he was being trapped into paying a compliment. Certainly Mr. Lawley, in

his intercourse with ladies, seemed like the teapot in the *Biglow Papers* :—

A teapot made o' pewter

Our Prudence had, thet wouldn't pour (all she could du) to suit her ;
Fust place the leaves 'ould choke the spout, so's not a drop 'ould dreen out,
Then Prude 'ould tip an' tip an' tip, till the holl kit bust clean out;
The kiver hinge-pin bein' lost, tea leaves an' tea an' kiver
'Ould all come out *kerswosh!* ez though the dam broke in a river.

It was not an easy matter for Mabel to get him to speak, but when he did speak he came out with the shock of a shower-bath. Mabel was a very womanly young woman, and therefore liked being bullied by a man she respected. "I don't think myself stupid in some things, but I do in others."

"You're not stupid in anything," said Lawley decisively, being now reassured as to her sincerity. "Understanding such stuff is no more a proof of cleverness than seeing in the dusk is a proof of good sight. You don't think a bat has better eyes than you, do you? If you have to read such books out to your father, like Milton's daughters, it's a good thing that, like them, you don't understand what you read. At least, *I* think so," said Lawley, sinking his hands deep into his trousers' pockets, and leaning back in the waggonette with a coolness and complacency that confounded George. Was this Petruchio the man that couldn't look a girl in the face? As for Mabel, this uncompromising disparagement of her father's favourite studies by the only man in Weston of whom she ever heard her father speak respectfully perplexed her considerably. Her faith in her father's profound wisdom was unshakable, but she had heard her father himself say more than once of Mr. Lawley, to Mr. Meekins, that it was a disgrace to the Church that such a man should be buried in a wretched little country living. Colonel Masters, indeed, knew Lawley only through articles of his which appeared in a leading Review; but he had an inordinate idea of a literary success which he had vainly sought himself. But if her father had a high opinion of Mr. Lawley, Mr. Lawley did not seem to return the compliment—at least, he spoke very slightly of those profound studies of which her father was a profound student. This, we say, perplexed Mabel considerably and held her silent. Meantime, Lawley was regarding her somewhat in the way in which he would regard an author whose first book he was reviewing. He ought not only to point out its defects and beauties, but to give the *débutante* what encouragement he could.

"Do you read new books, too?" he asked suddenly.

"I very seldom get the chance of reading any except what *you* would cast to the moles and bats," said Mabel, smiling.

"I wish you'd let me send you one now and then. I get batches of them every fortnight nearly, and there's sometimes one worth reading."

Mabel flushed with pleasure. "I should be so much obliged to you, Mr. Lawley, not only for the books, but for your choosing those you

think best for me. Since my aunt died I have had no one——” Here she checked herself, in the fear that she seemed implicitly reproaching her father. “I mean, I’ve read at random since I escaped from the schoolroom.”

“I’m afraid you’ll think you’ve got back to the schoolroom, or to the schoolmaster, anyhow,” said Lawley, suddenly brought to himself. Hitherto he had been looking rather beyond Mabel than at her, in a dreamy way that had grown upon him from living so much alone. But when Mabel checked herself for a moment, he naturally looked interrogatively into the flushed and lovely face turned up to his, and his shyness returned upon him in a moment, and “covered him all over, thoughts and all, like a cloak.” For the short remainder of the journey he relapsed into his reserve, and Mabel felt as she used to feel when Miss Murdoch took from her and locked away some interesting story, when its interest had just culminated.

Her conversation, however, with Mr. Lawley had the effect of rousing her aunt’s suspicions. It was quite evident to that old lady’s keen penetration that Mr. Lawley was paying Mabel marked attention, which Mabel was receiving with marked favour. Now Miss Masters, as we have already said, was irritated most unreasonably with Mr. Lawley, and her prejudice against him made her very particular to find out his means, prospects, etc., before she allowed this matter to go any further. Therefore she did what she could to keep the two apart for the rest of the day, and manœuvred the matter so skilfully that George and Mabel were thrown together for a great part of the afternoon, while the unhappy Mr. Lawley was chained to the camp-stool of the exacting artist.

Rambles among Books.

NO. II.—AUTOBIOGRAPHY.

NOBODY ever wrote a dull autobiography. If one may make such a bull, the very dullness would be interesting. The autobiographer has *ex officio* two qualifications of supreme importance in all literary work. He is writing about a topic in which he is keenly interested, and about a topic upon which he is the highest living authority. It may be reckoned, too, as a special felicity that an autobiography, alone of all books, may be more valuable in proportion to the amount of misrepresentation which it contains. We do not wonder when a man gives a false character to his neighbour, but it is always curious to see how a man contrives to present a false testimonial to himself. It is pleasant to be admitted behind the scenes and trace the growth of that singular phantom which, like the spectre of the Brocken, is the man's own shadow cast upon the coloured and distorting mists of memory. Autobiography for these reasons is so generally interesting, that I have frequently thought with the admirable Benvenuto Cellini that it should be considered as a duty by all eminent men; and, indeed, by men not eminent. As every sensible man is exhorted to make his will, he should also be bound to leave to his descendants some account of his experience of life. The dullest of us would in spite of themselves say something profoundly interesting, if only by explaining how they came to be so dull—a circumstance which is sometimes in great need of explanation. On reflection, however, we must admit that autobiography done under compulsion would be in danger of losing the essential charm of spontaneity. The true autobiography is written by one who feels an irresistible longing for confidential expansion; who is forced by his innate constitution to unbosom himself to the public of the kind of matter generally reserved for our closest intimacy. Confessions dictated by a sense of duty, like many records of religious experience, have rarely the peculiar attractiveness of those which are prompted by the simple longing for human sympathy. Nothing, indeed, in all literature is more impressive than some of the writings in which great men have laid bare to us the working of their souls in the severest spiritual crises. But the solemnity and the loftiness of purpose generally remove such work to a rather different category. Augustine's *Confessions* is an impassioned meditation upon great religious and philosophical questions which only condescends at intervals to autobiographical detail. Few books, to

descend a little in the scale, are more interesting whether to the fellow-believer or to the psychological observer, than Bunyan's *Grace Abounding*. We follow this real pilgrim through a labyrinth of strange scruples invented by a quick brain placed for the time at the service of a self-torturing impulse, and peopled by the phantoms created by a poetical imagination under stress of profound excitement. Incidentally we learn to know and to love the writer, and certainly not the less because the spiritual fermentation reveals no morbid affectation. We give him credit for exposing the trial and the victory simply and solely for the reason which he alleges; that is to say, because he really thinks that his experience offers useful lessons to his fellow-creatures. He is no attitudinizer, proud at the bottom of his heart of the sensibility which he professes to lament, nor a sanctimonious sentimentalist stimulating a false emotion for purposes of ostentation. He is as simple, honest, and soundhearted as he is tender and impassioned. But these very merits deprive the book of some autobiographical interest. It never enters his head that anybody will care about John Bunyan the tinker, or the details of his tinkering. He who painted the scenes in *Vanity Fair* could have drawn a vivid picture of Elstow and Bedford, of Puritanical preachers and Cromwellian soldiers, and the judges and gaolers under Charles II. Here and there, in scattered passages of his works, he gives us graphic anecdotes in passing which set the scene before us vividly as a bit of Pepys's diaries. The incidents connected with his commitment to prison are described with a dramatic force capable of exciting the envy of a practised reporter. But we see only enough to tantalise us with the possibilities. He tells us so little of his early life that his biographers cannot make up their minds as to whether he was, as Southey calls him, a "blackguard," or a few degrees above or below that zero-point of the scale of merit. Lord Macaulay takes it for granted that he was in the parliamentary, and Mr. Froude thinks it almost proved that he was in the Royalist army. He tells us nothing of the death of the first wife, whose love seems to have raised him from blackguardism; nor of his marriage to the second wife, who stood up for him so bravely before the judges, and was his faithful companion to the end of his pilgrimage. The book is therefore a profoundly interesting account of one phase in the development of the character of our great prose-poet; but hardly an autobiography. The narrative was worth writing, because his own heart, like his allegorical Mansoul, had been the scene of one incident in the everlasting struggle between the powers of light and darkness, not because the scene had any independent interest of its own.

In this one may be disposed to say Bunyan judged rightly. The wisest man, it is said, is he who realises most clearly the narrow limits of human knowledge; the greatest should be penetrated with the strongest conviction of his own insignificance. The higher we rise above the average mass of mankind, the more clearly we should see our own incapacity for acting the part of Providence. The village squire, who does not really believe in anything invisible from his own steeple,

may fancy that he is of real importance to the world, for the world for him means his village. "P. P. clerk of this parish" thought that all future generations would be interested in the fact that he had smoothed the dog's-ears in the great bible. A genuine statesman who knows something of the forces by which the world is governed should have seen through the humbug of history. He should have learnt the fable of the fly and the chariot wheel, and be aware that what are called his achievements are really the events upon which, through some accident of position, he has been allowed to inscribe his name. One stage in a nation's life gets itself labelled Cromwell, and another William Pitt; but perhaps Pitt and Cromwell were really of little more importance than some contemporary P. P. This doctrine, however, is considered, I know not why, to be immoral, and to smack of fatalism, cynicism, jealousy of great men, and other objectionable tendencies. We are in a tacit conspiracy to flatter conspicuous men at the expense of their fellow-workers, and he is the most generous and appreciative who can heap the greatest number of superlatives upon growing reputations, and add a stone to the gigantic pile of eulogy under which the historical proportions of some great figures are pretty well buried. We must not complain, therefore, if we flatter the vanity which seems to be the most essential ingredient in the composition of a model biographer. A man who expects that future generations will be profoundly interested in the state of his interior seems to be drawing a heavy bill upon posterity. And yet it is generally honoured. We are flattered perhaps by this exhibition of confidence. We are touched by the demand for sympathy. There is something pathetic in this belief that we shall be moved by the record of past sufferings and aspirations as there is in a child's confidence that you will enter into its little fears and hopes. And perhaps vanity is so universal a weakness, and, in spite of good moralising, it so strongly resembles a virtue in some of its embodiments, that we cannot find it in our hearts to be angry with it. We can understand it too thoroughly. And then we make an ingenious compromise with our consciences. Our interest in Pepys's avowals of his own foibles, for example, is partly due to the fact that whilst we are secretly conscious of at least the germs of similar failings, the consciousness does not bring any sense of shame, because we set down the confession to the account of poor Pepys himself. The man who, like Goldsmith, is so running over with jealousy that he is forced to avow it openly, seems to be a sort of excuse to us for cherishing a less abundant stock of similar sentiment. This is one occult source of pleasure in reading autobiography. We have a delicate shade of conscious superiority in listening to the vicarious confession. "I am sometimes troubled," said Boswell, "by a disposition to stinginess." "So am I," replied Johnson, "but I do not tell it." That is our attitude in regard to the autobiographer. After all, we say to ourselves, this distinguished person is such a one as we are; and even more so, for he cannot keep it to himself. The conclusion is not quite fair, it may be, when applied to the case

of a diarist like Pepys, who, poor man, meant only to confide his thoughts to his note-books. But it applies more or less to every genuine autobiographer—to every man, that is, who has deliberately written down a history of his own feelings and thoughts for the benefit of posterity.

The prince of all autobiographers in this full sense of the word—the man who represents the genuine type in its fullest realisation—is undoubtedly Rousseau. The *Confessions* may certainly be regarded as not only one of the most remarkable, but as in parts one of the most repulsive books ever written. Yet, one must add, it is also one of the most fascinating. Rousseau starts by declaring that he is undertaking a task which has had no precedent, and will have no imitators—the task of showing a man in all the truth of nature, and that man himself. How far he is perfectly sincere in this, or in the declaration which immediately follows, that no one of his readers will be able to pronounce himself a better man than Jean Jacques Rousseau, is a question hardly to be answered. The avowal is at any rate characteristic of the true autobiographer. It reflects the subtle vanity which, taking now the guise of perfect sincerity, and now that of deep humility, encourages us to colour as highly as possible both our vices and our virtues as equally entitling us to the sympathies of mankind: that strange and Protean sensibility which we are puzzled to classify either as an excessive craving for admiration, or a mere morbid desire for self-abasement. Certainly in Rousseau it sometimes shows itself in a shamelessness which it is very hard to forgive unless we will admit the ambiguous and well-worn plea of partial insanity. The pleasure—always, it must be granted, a very questionable one—of recognising our own failings in our superiors, passes too often into sheer disgust or shuddering horror at the spectacle of genius grovelling in the mire. But Rousseau represents an abnormal development of all the qualities of his class; and this, the ugliest amongst the autobiographic instincts, is hardly developed out of proportion to the rest. And, therefore, if we cannot quite forgive, we are not altogether alienated. We read, for example, one of those amazing confessions of contemptible meanness which makes us wonder that human fingers could commit them to paper: the story of his casting the blame of a petty theft upon an innocent girl, to her probable ruin; of his desertion of his friend lying in a fit on the pavement of a strange town; of the more grievous crime of his abandonment of his own children to the foundling hospital. How can any interest survive in the narrator except that kind of interest which a physiologist takes in some ghastly disease? It would be a libel upon ourselves to suppose that we see the reflections of our own hearts in such narratives, or that we can in any degree take them as an indirect flattery to our own superiority. Such an emotion may conceivably be present in some other passages. When, for example, we read how, on the death of a dear friend, Rousseau confesses to one who loved them both that he derived some pleasure from the reflection that he should inherit an excellent black coat. He may perhaps be giving to us the sort of satisfaction which we derive from a keen maxim of Roche-

foucauld. We recognise the truth—painful though it may be in itself—that some strand of mean and selfish feeling may be interwoven with genuine regret; and we may reconcile ourselves by interpreting it as a proof that some of the sentiments for which we have blushed are not inconsistent with real kindness of heart. We may smile still more harmlessly at the quaint avowal of absurdity when Rousseau decides that he will test the probability of his future fate by throwing a stone at a tree trunk. A hit is to mean salvation, and a miss, damnation. He chooses a very big trunk very close to him, succeeds in hitting it, and sets his mind at rest. We may congratulate ourselves without malice on this proof that men of genius may indulge in very grotesque follies. A student of human nature may be grateful for a frank avowal now and then of the “fears of the brave and follies of the wise.” But how can we justify ourselves in point of taste—to say nothing of morality—at not shrinking back from the more hideous avowals of downright depravity contained in this strange record which is to convince us that none amongst the sons of men can claim superiority to Rousseau?

The answer is not far to seek. One leading peculiarity of Rousseau, the great prophet of sentimentalism, is that exaltation of the immediate sensation at the expense of hard realities which is the mark of all sentimentalism. He can enjoy intensely, but cannot restrain a single impulse with a view to future enjoyment. He can sympathise keenly with immediate sufferings, but shrinks from admitting that indulgence may be the worst cruelty. His only rule of life is to give free play to his impulses. All discipline is tyranny. Education is to consist in stimulating the emotions at the expense of the reason. And, therefore, facts in general are on the whole objectionable and inconvenient things. Your practical man is merely a wheel in a gigantic machinery, for ever grinding out barren results and never leaving himself time for the pure happiness of feeling. He would abolish space and time to make one dreamer happy. Dreamland is the only true reality. There facts conform to feeling instead of crushing it out of existence. There we can be optimists; see virtue rewarded, simplicity honoured, genius appreciated, and the substance of happiness pursued instead of its idle shadows—external show, and hard-won triumphs that pall in the fruition. Nothing is more characteristic of this tendency than the passage in which he describes the composition of the *Nouvelle Héloïse*. The impossibility, he says, of grasping realities cast him into the land of chimeras: seeing nothing in existence which was worthy of his delirium, he nourished it in an ideal world which his creative imagination soon peopled with beings after his own heart. He was in love—not with an external object, but with love itself; he formed out of his passionate longings those beautiful, unreal, highstrung beings, whose ecstasies and agonies kept fine ladies sitting up all night in forgetfulness of balls and assemblies, and which now, alas! have faded, as unreal things are apt to fade, and become rather wearisome and slightly absurd. Facts revenge themselves upon the man

who denies their existence ; and poor Rousseau did not escape the inevitable Nemesis. His follies and his crimes sprang from this fatal habit of sacrificing everything to the immediate impulse ; his reveries seduced him into the region of downright illusions ; and his optimism—by a curious, but not uncommon inversion—became the strongest proof of his actual misery. He found realities so painful that he swore that they must be dreams ; as dreams were so sweet, that they must be the true realities. “All men are born free,” as he says in his famous sentence ; “and men are everywhere in chains.” That is the true Rousseau logic. Everything must be right in some transcendental sense, because in an actual sense everything is wrong. We say that men take a cheerful or a doleful view of the universe according to the state of their own livers ; but sometimes the reverse seems to hold good. It requires, it would seem, unusual buoyancy of spirits to endure the thought that the world is a scene of misery ; and the belief in its happiness is sometimes the attempt of the miserable man to reconcile himself to his lot. Anyhow, Rousseau had learnt this dangerous lesson. He suffered from a morbid appetite for happiness ; his intense longing for enjoyment stimulated an effeminate shrinking from the possibility of the crumpled rose-leaf. He identifies himself with the man who left his mistress in order to write letters to her. The absent—in this sense—have no blemishes. And this is true of the past as of the distant. Foresight, he says, always spoils his enjoyment ; the future is pure loss to him ; for to look forward is always to anticipate possibilities of evil. He lives entirely, as he says elsewhere, in the present ; but in a present which includes the enjoyment of the past pleasures. “Not heaven itself upon the past has power,” and we can nowhere be absolutely safe except in brooding over the moments of happiness which have survived by reason of their pleasantness.

This is part of the charm of the *Confessions*. Finding no pure enjoyment in the present, he says, he returned by fits to the serene days of his youth. He chewed the cud of past delight, and lived again his life to the Charmettes. Hence sprang the *Nouvelle Héloïse*, placed amongst the scenery of his early youth and constantly reviving real experiences. He apologises for giving us the details of his youth ; but the apology is clearly needless. He gives what he delights in. His youthful memories grow brighter as the later become effaced ; the least facts of that time please him, because they are of that time. He remembers the place, the people, the time ; the servant moving in the room, the swallow entering the window, the fly settling on his hand whilst he writes his lesson ; he trembles with pleasure as he recalls the minutest details—and we feel the reflection of his delight. Indeed, this is one secret of most autobiography. There is something touching in those introductory fragments which are so common in biographies. The old man, we see, has been enticed to write a book by the charm of the first chapter. He tells us with eager interest the story of his early days ; he remembers the village

school and his initiation into the alphabet, or calls up the sacred vision of the mother whose figure still stands out amidst the mists of memory ; but as he reaches the point where the light of common day blends with the romantic colouring of childhood, his hand fails, and he sums up the remainder of his history, if he has the courage to continue, in a few barren facts and dates. The phenomenon recurs again and again and leaves us to infer, according to our tastes, that infancy is the time of real happiness, or that the appearance of happiness always belongs to the distant. Rousseau tries to explain it in his own case. He long remained a child, he says ; objects always made less impression upon him than their memories ; and as all his ideas were images, the first engraved were the deepest, and the later rather blended with them than effaced them.

To explain Rousseau's power over his generation, and even his strongest interest for us, we should require to add other considerations. Rousseau's dreams, in fact, were not those of the mystic or of the poetical philosopher. If he cared, in one sense, very little for facts, it was because the past and the present overpowered the future. He could not cut himself apart from the world, as some meditative minds have done who live by choice in the region of abstract speculation. His temperament was too sensuous, his sympathies with those around him too keen, to permit him to find a permanent refuge in the gorgeous but unsubstantial world of poetic imagery. His senses bound him fast to realities as upon a rock on which he was always struggling impatiently and spasmodically. It is in the vicissitudes of this struggle that the interest of his personal story consists. For it leads him to find that solution which has been preached in one form or other by so many moralists in all ages, and which had a special meaning for the society of his day. Ancient philosophers said that the great secret of life is in placing your happiness in things which depend upon ourselves, and not in things which are at the mercy of circumstance. Happiness, says a modern prophet, is to be found by lessening your denominator, not by increasing your numerator ; by restricting your wants, not by multiplying your enjoyments. The great illusion of life is the childish fancy that you can get the moon by crying for it, instead of learning that the moon is beyond your reach. You must learn the great secret of renunciation. Rousseau's version of this doctrine was given with an intensity of conviction which moved the hearts of his contemporaries ; and the *Confessions* are a kind of continuous comment upon the text. Are we, it may be asked, to take the ascetic view—to admit that happiness is impossible in this life, and to seek future blessedness by mortifying the affections which seek for present gratification ? No, Rousseau would say ; happiness is everything ; to get as much enjoyment out of life as we possibly can is the one conceivable end of a human being. Nobody could be a more thorough hedonist. Then, should we seek for happiness in active life devoted to some absorbing ambition, or rather in courting those lofty emotions or those intellectual tastes which are the fruit of a thorough

cultivation of all our faculties? No, again; for active life means weariness and disappointment, and exchange of substance for vain shadows; and the more men are cultivated, the more sophisticated and unreal become their lives, and the less their real powers of enjoyment. Then, should we be Epicureans of the vulgar type, and give ourselves up to the indulgence of animal appetites? That, again, though Rousseau sometimes falls into perilous approximation to that error in practice, is as far as possible from his better mind. Nobody, in fact—and it is the redeeming quality in his life—could set a higher value upon the simple affections. A life of calm domestic tranquillity—the idyllic life of unsophisticated country villages, of regular labour, and innocent recreation—is the ideal which he set before his generation with all the fervour of his eloquence. That he made a terrible mess of it himself is undeniable; it is equally undeniable that the praises of domestic life come with a very bad grace from the man who sanctioned the worst practices of a corrupt society by abandoning his own children, though he tries to represent even that amazing delinquency as a corollary from his principles; and it must also be admitted that his Arcadia has too often the taint of sentimental unreality. But the doctrine takes a worthier form, not only in those passages of his speculative writings which manifest his deep sympathy with the poor and simple crushed under an effete system of social tyranny, but in the many passages of the *Confessions* where he recalls his brief approximations to a realisation of his dreams. He might claim to have found “love in huts where poor men lie;” and to have been qualified by experience for recognising the surpassing beauty of simple happiness. That is the secret charm of those eloquent passages to which the jaded fine ladies and gentlemen of his days turned again and again with an enthusiastic sympathy which it would be grossly unjust to set down as mere affectation. Such, for example, is his description of the delicious strolls by his beloved Lake of Geneva, where every scene was redolent of youthful associations; where he seemed to be almost within reach of that sweet tranquil life which was yet for him but a vanishing mirage; and where alone he declares that he might obtain perfect happiness, if he had but a faithful friend, a loving wife, a cow, and a little boat. He smiles sadly enough at the simplicity which has frequently led him to that region in search of this imaginary bliss, and at the contrast between the dream and the reality. Even in Paris he could grasp a like phantom. Here with his half-idiotic Theresa (who had, however, the heart of an angel), he found perfect happiness for a time. He pictures himself sitting at the open window, the sill forming his table, for a frugal supper; looking down upon the street from the fourth story, and enjoying a crust of bread, a few cherries, a bit of cheese, and a bottle of wine. Who, he exclaims, can feel the happiness of these feasts? Friendship, confidence, intimacy, gentleness of soul, how sweet is the seasoning you bring! And, of course, he soon passes to a confession proving that his paradise had its snake. But the better sentiment, though clogged and degraded by ignoble

passions, almost reconciles us to the man. Rousseau represents the strange combination of a kind of sensual appetite for pure and simple pleasures. On one side he reminds us of Keats, by his intense appreciation of sensuous beauty; and, on the other, of Cowper, by his love of such simple pleasures as our English poet enjoyed when sitting at Mrs. Unwin's tea-urn. It is a strange, almost a contradictory mixture; but Rousseau's life is a struggle between antagonisms; and until you admit that human nature is in some sense a contradictory compound, and can take delight in the queer results which grow out of them, you are hardly qualified to be a student of autobiography. Your proper biographer glides over these difficulties, or tries to find some reconciliation. The man who tells his own story reveals them because he is unconscious of their mixture.

Rousseau, I said, was the type of all autobiographers; and for the obvious reason, that no man ever turned himself inside out for the inspection of posterity so completely, and that even when he was unconscious of the exposure. Even his affectations are instructive. But when we think of some other autobiographers we may be inclined to retract. There are, when one comes to reflect, more ways of killing a cat than choking her with cream; and there are more ways of revealing your character than by this deliberate introspection, this brooding over past feelings, and laying bare every impulse of your nature. So, if Rousseau is to be called the typical autobiographer, it is perhaps in virtue simply of those strange contradictions which give piquancy to his *Confessions*, and to those of many other men to whom the great problem of existence presented itself in different terms. So, for example, it would be difficult to imagine a more complete antithesis to Rousseau than we find in Benvenuto Cellini, whose autobiography is almost equally interesting in a totally different way. He is a man in whose company the very conception of sentimentalism seems to be an absurdity; who is so incapable of reflective brooding that he is just as proud of his worst crimes as of his greatest artistic achievements; who tells with equal glee how he struck his dagger into the nape of his enemy's neck, and made a gold button of unparalleled beauty for the Pope's cope; who is so full of energy that his life seems to be one desperate struggle, and he is most at home in the periods of most overpowering excitement, whether firing guns at the siege of Rome, or pitching all his plate into the furnace to help the fusing of the statue of Perseus; so full of intense vitality that when we read his memoirs it becomes difficult to realise the fact that all these throbbing passions and ambitions are still for ever, and that we peaceable readers are alive; at once a man of high artistic genius, and yet such a braggart and a liar as to surpass Bobadil or the proverbial Ferdinand Mendez Pinto; a standing refutation of that pleasant moral commonplace which tries to associate genius with modesty; a queer compound of reckless audacity and defiance of all constituted authority with abject superstition; a man, in short, who makes us wonder, as we read,

whether the world has advanced or gone back ; whether we have gained or lost by substituting the dounce, respectable jeweller, and the vulgar blackguard of modern London, for this magnificent goldsmith bravo of the Florence of the sixteenth century. The only writer in our own literature who, at a long interval, recalls this brilliant apparition, is Lord Herbert of Cherbury. In him, too, we find the singular combination of the fire-eating duellist with the man of high intellectual power. Horace Walpole, who procured the publication of his autobiography, says that the reader will be astonished to find that the "history of Don Quixote was the life of Plato." Herbert, it is true, was not quite a Plato nor a Quixote. His thirst for chivalrous adventures may indeed remind us of the Don or of Cellini ; though somehow, though he wandered through Europe in true knight-errant spirit, always on the look-out for occasions of proving that courage for which, so he declares, he had as high a reputation as any man of his time, and was as irritable, punctilious, and given to dare-devil deeds as the most precise of cavaliers could desire, he seems to have had singular ill-luck. Somehow, the authorities always interpose to prevent his fighting. The vanity of Lord Herbert is of a more reflective and priggish type than that of Cellini. Instead of taking himself for granted, with the superlative audacity of his predecessor, he contemplates his own perfections complacently, and draws his own portrait, for the benefit of his descendants, as an embodiment of the perfect gentleman accomplished in all knightly arts, and full to overflowing of the most becoming sentiments. He has, in fact, a rather obtrusive moral sense, whereas an entire absence of any incumbrance of that kind is one of Cellini's peculiarities ; or, at least, the Italian assumes that whatever he does must be right, whereas the Englishman is simply convinced that he does whatever is right. Herbert parades himself as a model with an amazing consciousness of his own perfection, and sets forth his various natural endowments—such, for example, as the delicious odour which exudes from his body and perfumes even his clothes—as a kind of providential testimony to his merits. When a voice from heaven orders him to publish his great book *De Veritate*, we feel that no human *imprimatur* would be adequate to so important an occasion. And, in spite of his swelling self-satisfaction, we must admit that he has real claims upon our respect ; in fact, Herbert, though not so great a poet as his brother George, at least wrote one poem which has a curious interest as anticipating, not only the metre, but, in some degree, the sentiment, of *In Memoriam* ; and, though less conspicuous as a philosopher than Bacon or Hobbes, wrote books in which it is possible to trace some remarkable analogies to the teaching of Kant. When Walpole and Gray first tried to read the life they could not get on for "laughing and screaming," and Walpole was rather vexed when people took Herbert a little too seriously, and were inclined to admire him as a worthy successor to Sir Philip Sidney. Yet Herbert is but one of many proofs (perhaps Walpole himself was another) that all coxcombs are not fools.

We have, it is plain, got a long way from Rousseau. We are almost, it may be said, at the very opposite pole of character. If vanity be a determining force in both cases, it is in the two cases controlled and directed by opposite passions. Combined with a morbid tendency to retrospection, a weak self-pity, an effeminate shrinking from pain, it reveals itself as a perverse pleasure in baring to public gaze those viler impulses which most men shrink from revealing to themselves. In the masterful, overbearing, active character, it appears in the more natural shape of straightforward ostentation, though it sometimes leads to the same end; for it displays follies and vices, not because they are shameful, but for the opposite reason that it sees nothing in them to be ashamed of. Whether it should be called by the same name, as manifested in the one or in the other combination, is a question for the unlucky psychologist who has already a sufficient burden of insoluble problems. And we might find new puzzles in abundance for the same person by tracing the manifold transformations of the same Protean quality. We might skip from the Quixote-Plato—rather, one might say, the Bobadil-Kant—to another autobiographer, like him in little but the power of amusing, the vivacious Colley Cibber. Cibber's vanity is of a simpler type. It seems to be an unaccountable freak of nature that Cibber should have been the descendant of a Schleswig-Holstein father and an English mother. We could have sworn that he was a born Frenchman. His vanity is that which we generally attribute to the race whom we used to call our "lively neighbours." In other words, instead of being priggish or sulky like the English, it is closely allied to good sense, good humour, and simplicity. It implies unfeigned self-complacency quite unalloyed by self-deception. It supplied the excellent Colley with an armour of proof which made him absolutely impervious even to the most vicious stings of Pope's poisonous satire. He took all ridicule with the most imperturbable good temper, because he fully recognised, and was perfectly reconciled to the fact, that he was ridiculous. He writes his life, as he tells us with admirable serenity, because he was vain, and liked to talk about himself. What can the critic say more? "Expose me? Why, dear sir, does not every man that writes expose himself? Can you make me more ridiculous than nature has made me?" To hurt such a man by correct portraiture was impossible; and when Pope used to injure him by giving him the absurdly incorrect name of Dunce, the satirist missed his mark too palpably to hurt anybody but himself. And so, though the laughing-stock of all the wits, assailed by Pope and Fielding, the lucky Cibber, lapped in his invulnerable vanity, went gaily through his eighty-six years of life, as brisk and buoyant to the end as when he had only to go upon the stage with his natural manners to be the ideal representative of the Foppingtons and Easys of his own comedy. If the autobiography be slightly deficient on the side of sentiment, we may console ourselves by admitting that some of the descriptions of the actors of the time would not disgrace Charles Lamb. Would we find

another variety of innocent and excessive vanity? Take up the memoirs—unfortunately fragmentary—of one whose long life ran side by side with Cibber's for some eighty-two years, though in oddly different surroundings,—Swift's "wicked Will Whiston," so called because so transparently guileless and well-meaning that even bigots could only smile at his absurdities. In reading him we fancy that we must be studying a new version of the *Vicar of Wakefield*. In truth, however, that good Dr. Primrose was one of Whiston's disciples, and got into trouble, as we may remember, by advocating a crotchet learnt from his predecessor a little too warmly. The master, however, suffered longer than the disciple, and shows just the same innocuous vanity in regard to his own supposed discoveries, and the same simple-minded wonder that others should fail to be converted, or should refuse to sacrifice preferment to crotchets about the date of the Apostolical Constitutions. Whiston's self-complacency reappears with a difference in Baxter's ponderous autobiography. The copious outpourings of the good man help us to understand the report, which he can happily deny, that his multitudinous publications had ruined his bookseller; but it is full of interesting display of character, and nowhere more than in the profound conviction that if he had been able to apply a few more sermons he would have converted Cromwell and his troopers from their rebellious purposes, and the innocent enthusiasm with which he hurls his elaborate syllogisms at the heads of Charles II.'s bishops, believing, poor man, in all good faith that the policy of the Restoration government was to be determined by scholastic argumentation.

If we seek for an excellent contrast we may go to those admirable representatives of the worldly bishop of the now extinct type, Newton or Watson. There is something quite touching in Watson's complaints of an unappreciative world. He had been made a professor of chemistry without having studied the very elements of the science, a professor of divinity without having studied theology before, or taking the trouble to study it afterwards. He was appointed to a bishopric because he was a sound Whig, and passed his life in a delightful country town on the banks of Windermere without ever bothering himself to reside in his Welsh diocese. But the stoppage of his preferment at this point is for him a conclusive proof that true Christian principles could not meet with their reward in this world. How else account for this scandalous neglect of one who, in addition to all his other merits, had taken great trouble to plant trees, and to make an honourable provision for his children—as well as giving them a sound education. It is a natural corollary that the man whose memoirs are thus a continuous grumble over the absence of preferment, should specially pride himself on his thorough self-respect. He belongs, he says, to the oaks, not to the willows. Whenever he asks for a vacant bishopric, he explains that it is only in deference to the wishes of his friends. For himself he asks for nothing better than a life of retirement, though the king and his ministers will be eternally disgraced for having left him to enjoy that blessing. The finest satirist, Fielding or

Thackeray, might have been proud of portraying this ingenious and yet transparent self-deception ; of unravelling the artifice by which worldliness and preferment hunting is so wrapped in blustering self-assertion as to appear—to the actor himself—as dignified independence of spirit.

Running over such varieties of character, we may ask whether it is fair to set down the autobiographic impulse as in all cases a manifestation of vanity. Or if we call it vanity, must we not stretch the meaning of the word beyond all bearing? The old psychologists used to maintain that every passion was a special form of self-love ; and, if we may take such a license, we may call every man vain who takes an interest in his own affairs, and expects that others may be interested. He may hold that opinion even whilst sincerely believing that his success in the game of life was more due to the cards he held than to his intrinsic skill. If that still imply the presence of some latent vanity, some bias to our judgment lying below the region of conscious reflection, it is certainly of a scarcely perceptible kind. Vanity in this sense is but the inverse side of a man's philosophy of life. It is the value which he sets upon certain qualities of mind and character which is, no doubt, apt to be more or less connected with the trifling circumstance that he takes them to be his own. But in some cases this latter consideration has so little prominence that we almost overlook it. The autobiography takes so much the form of a philosophical sermon on the true principles of conduct, that we quite forget that the preacher is his own text. He treats himself with apparent impartiality, as if he were merely a scientific specimen whose excellent adaptation to the general scheme of things deserves the notice of an impartial inquirer. It happens to be the case nearest at hand, but is interesting only in the light of the general impersonal principle.

It is curious to trace this in one of the most interesting of modern autobiographers. J. S. Mill begins his recollections by disavowing—with obvious sincerity—any egoistic motive. He wishes to show the effect of a particular mode of education, to trace the influence upon a receptive mind of various currents of modern thought ; and, above all, to show how large a debt he owed to certain persons who, but for this avowal, would not receive their due meed of recognition. He is to give a lecture upon his own career as dispassionately as Professor Owen might lecture upon a creature which died in the palæozoic era. In pursuing this end, Mill made more revelations as to his own character than he perhaps knew himself. The book is much else, but it is also an exposition of a definite theory of life. Some readers were astonished to find that, as Mill puts it, a Benthamite might be something more than a mere "reasoning machine." That description, he admits, was applicable in some cases, and even to himself at one period of his life. But nothing could be clearer to readers of the autobiography—as, indeed, it was clear enough to the observers of his later career—that, so far from being a mere reasoning machine, Mill was a man of strong affections, and even feminine sensibility. And in this, as some critics have said, consists the peculiar

pathos of the book. It was the story of a man of strong feelings, who had been put into a kind of moral and logical strait-waistcoat, and kept there till it had become a part of himself. The diagnosis of the case showed it, upon this understanding, to be one of partial atrophy of the affections; or rather—for the affections clearly survived—illustrated the effect of depriving them of their natural sustenance. To Mill, himself, it was rather a record of the means by which the strait-waistcoat had been forced to yield. Like Bunyan, he had been locked up by Giant Despair, and had escaped from the dungeons, though by a different method. The account of the crisis in his moral development which corresponds to a conversion in the case of Bunyan, gives the real key to his story. He had been put into the strait-waistcoat by that tremendous old gentleman, James Mill, whose force of mind produced less effect through his books than by his personal influence upon his immediate surroundings. His doctrine repelled most readers till it had been made more sympathetic by passing through the more sensitive and emotional nature of his son. The ultimate effect was not to suppress J. S. Mill's affections, but to confine them to certain narrow channels. The primary effect, however, was to produce that "reasoning machine" period in which the son was a simple logic-mill grinding out the materials supplied by the father and Bentham. Now old Mill was not simply a kind of personified "categorical imperative"—a rigid external conscience imposing a fixed rule upon his filial disciple, but his doctrine was certainly a trying one. He held that the sole end of morality was to produce happiness, and at the same time he did not believe in happiness. "He thought human life a poor thing at best after the freshness of youth and unsatisfied curiosity had gone by." He and his disciples denounced all emotion as "sentimentality," and fully shared that English prejudice which, as J. S. Mill declares, regards feeling, especially if it has a touch of the romantic or exalted, to be something intrinsically disgraceful. Here then was the uncomfortable dilemma into which the younger Mill was driven, and which made him miserable. A rigid sense of duty was the sole rule of life; duty meant the production of happiness; and happiness was a mere illusion and unsubstantial phantom. No wonder if a period followed during which the world seemed to him weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable. To feel that all that is left for one is to be a machine grinding out theorems in political economy is certainly not an exhilarating state of things.

The escape from this condition, as Mill represents, involved two discoveries, which, like all such discoveries, are old enough in the state of abstract theory, and new only in so far as they become actual possessions and active principles of conduct. Happiness, he discovered, was to be found by not aiming at happiness; by working for some external end and not meditating upon your own feelings. And, secondly, he discovered the importance of cultivating those sympathies and sentiments which he had previously been inclined to despise as mere incumbrances

to his reasoning machinery. But do not the two doctrines clash? Is not an æsthetic cultivation of happiness a name for that introspective brooding of which Rousseau is the great example, implying precisely that thirst for happiness as an ultimate end and aim which his other principle showed to be suicidal? Consciously to cultivate the emotions is to become a sentimentalist—the very thing which he was anxious to renounce. The apparent paradox was solved for him by the help of Wordsworth, who taught him that the charm of tranquil contemplation might be heightened instead of dulled by a vivid interest in the common feelings and common destinies of human beings; and that æsthetic delight in nature was perfectly compatible with scientific interest in its laws. The famous ode proved to him that the first freshness of youthful enjoyment could be replaced by a wider interest in our fellows; and that the thoughts which gather round the setting sun are not something distinct from, but really identical with, those suggested by a watch over man's mortality. This teaching, he says, dispersed for ever his youthful depression.

The problem seems a simple one when thus stated. How to cultivate your feelings without becoming sentimental? Find your happiness in the happiness of others; and regard even the grinding of that logical mill as work done for the benefit of your kind. Problems, however, which have to be worked out by modifying your own character take a good deal more labour than is implied in putting together a couple of syllogisms. And it is in this modification of character that the peculiar interest of the autobiography consists. The aversion of his mind from his own private interests, the intense devotion of his mental energies to what he regarded as the great needs of his fellow-men, the constant reference of his apparently most abstract speculation to practical reforms, are obvious and most honourable characteristics of Mill as a thinker. One may doubt whether women will be as much improved by receiving votes as he anticipated; one cannot doubt the generosity with which he revolted against their supposed "subjection." But there is another sense in which this theory of the vast importance of "extra-regarding" habits brings out some curious results. We are all such adepts at self-deception that we need not wonder if the very resolution not to think of oneself sometimes tends to a more refined kind of self-consciousness. I have often fancied that nobody can be so dogmatic as your thoroughly candid person. The fact that he has listened to all sides gives him a kind of right in his own opinion to speak with the authority of a judge. It has been said that a tendency to be "cock-sure" is a special characteristic of Mill's school; and perhaps we may recognise it in their master not the less because it is combined with a scrupulous desire to grant a hearing to all antagonists. But another manifestation of character is never interesting. No one could be more anxious than Mill to arrogate nothing to himself. Nobody could state more explicitly that his merit was less in original thought than in willingness to learn from others, and thus that his true

function was to mediate between the public and the original thinkers. And therefore it is natural to find him insisting with passionate eagerness upon the superlative merits of the woman who was, according to him, the guide of his mature years, as his father had been of his infancy and youth. Here was the practical commentary on the text of cultivating the emotions. If he withdrew from society and many social enjoyments, it was because his whole emotional strength was concentrated upon a single object. We listen with some mixture of feeling to his rather strained and exalted eulogy. It may be true that Mrs. Mill was more of a poet than Carlyle, and more of a thinker than Mill himself; that she was like Shelley, but that Shelley was but a child to what she ultimately became; that her wisdom was "all but unrivalled," and much more to the same purpose. It may, I say, be true, for one cannot prove a negative in regard to a person of whom the world knows so little. Yet it is a weakness, though an amiable weakness, to attempt by force of such language to overcome the inevitable decree of circumstances, and to try to dictate to the world an opinion which it cannot receive upon any single authority. It may be profoundly melancholy that such exalted merit should vanish without leaving more tangible traces; but it is useless to resent the fact, or to suppose that when such traces are non-existent, the defect can be supplied by the most positive assertions that they might have existed. And Mill would have seen in any other case what was the inevitable suggestion to his readers. He could not, he says, "detect any mixture of errors" in the truths which she struck out far in advance of him. What are the opinions in which a man detects no mixture of error? Plainly his own. But these were far in advance of him? That means that they were deductions from his own. Is it possible, to speak it plainly, to resist a strong impression that these extravagant expressions of admiration may have been lavished upon a living echo—an echo, it is true, skilful enough to anticipate as well as to repeat, but still essentially an echo? We know, for Mill has told us, what he did alone, and we know what he did in co-operation; and if the earlier work was not his best, it certainly contained the whole sum and substance of his later teaching. That his wife must have been a remarkable woman may be a fair deduction from his admiration; that she was all that he then thought her would be, to say the least of it, a very rash conjecture.

Happiness, says Mill, is to be found by aiming at something different from happiness. And if we thus cheat ourselves into happiness, we may attain to the vanity of self-esteem by a similar expedient. By lavishing all our enthusiasm upon one who is but a second self, we may deprive our appreciation of our own merits of its apparent arrogance. This, indeed, is one of the many illusions which give a peculiar interest to the unconscious confessions of autobiographers. But neither is it to be roughly set down as all illusion, and still less as an unworthy sentiment. It in no sort diminishes our interest in discovering that this so-called reasoning machine was a man of the most delicate fibre and most tender affections.

It is easy to forgive the illusions against which a thick cuirass of tough selfishness is the only known safeguard of complete efficacy. Rather it helps to convince us that Mill should be classed in some respects with the unworldly enthusiasts of the Vicar of Wakefield type whose very simplicity leads them to a harmless vanity which exaggerates their own infallibility and importance to the world. He had the character, though not the crotchets, of the lifelong recluse. Though his intellect was deeply interested in the great problems of contemporary thought, and though he had been for many years in State affairs, there was a wall of separation between himself and his contemporary society. When he came into Parliament he came as re-entering the world from a remote hermitage. Hermits, whether they come from deserts or from the India Office, have a certain tendency to intolerance and contempt for the social part of the species. They have lost some human feeling and preach crusades with a reckless indifference to consequences. I cannot determine how far Mill might be rightly accused of a want of practical sense. But in any case he had nothing of the bitterness or the harsh pedantry of the solitary theorist. Even his enemies could see that his sympathies were fresh and generous, and that his impulses were invariably generous. As a philanthropist, his philanthropy was not of the merciless and inhuman variety. The discovery of the fact was a surprise at the time to those who believed in the traditional Benthamite and Malthusian. The autobiography, with its strange bursts of emotion, perhaps reveals the true secret. If he naturally exaggerated the merits of the partner of his hermitage, he did not necessarily exaggerate her services to him. It is easily credible that her company saved him from ossifying into a mere grinder of formulæ and syllogisms. We shrink a little from certain overstrung phrases, but they reveal to us the pathos of the man's life. Admit that his affection produced illusion, or that it covered and was combined with a sort of vicarious self-conceit, yet at bottom it represents the intense devotion which springs only out of simplicity and tenderness of nature.

It would be tempting here to draw the obvious parallel between Mill and Carlyle, which must just now be in every one's mind; for certainly whatever may be said of the *Reminiscences* just published, they contain one of the most remarkable self-revelations ever given to the world, and the relations of the two men to vigorous fathers and passionately adored wives have singular points of contrast and resemblance. But I must be content to close this ramble through some famous autobiographies by touching upon one which often seems to me to be the most delightful of its class. I know, as everybody knows, what may be said against Gibbon: against his want of high enthusiasm, his deficient sympathy with the great causes and their heroes, the provoking self-sufficiency and apparent cold-bloodedness of the fat composed little man. And yet, when reading his autobiography and contrasting it with some of those we have considered, I find myself constantly led to a conclusion not quite

in accordance with the proper rules of morality. After all, one cannot help asking, did not Gibbon succeed in solving the problem of life more satisfactorily than almost anybody one knows? Other autobiographies are for the most part records of hard struggles with fate, plaintive lamentations over the inability to obtain any solid satisfaction out of life, appeals of disappointed vanity to the judgment of an indifferent posterity, vain-glorious braggings over successes which should rather have been the cause of shame, weak regrets for the vanishing pleasures of youth and hopeless attempts to make the might-have-been pass muster with the actual achievement. The more a man prides himself upon his successes, the more we feel how good a case a rival's advocate could make on the other side: and when he laments over his failures, the more we are inclined to say that after all it served him right. But when in imagination we take that famous turn with Gibbon upon that terrace at Lausanne beneath the covered walk of acacias, look up to the serene moon and the silent lake, and hear him soliloquise upon the conclusion of the *Decline and Fall*, we feel that we are in presence of a man who has a right to his complacency. He has not aimed, perhaps, at the highest mark, but he has hit the bull's-eye. Given his conception of life, he has done his task to perfection. With singular felicity, he has come at the exact moment and found the exact task to give full play to his powers. Nobody had yet laid the keystone in the great arch of history; and he laid it so well that his work can never be superseded. Somebody defines a life to be *une pensée de jeunesse exécutée par l'âge mûr*. It was Gibbon's singular good fortune to illustrate that saying as few men have done. Though his plan ripened slowly and with all deliberation, he acted as if he had foreseen the end from the beginning. If he had been told in his boyhood, You shall live so long a life, with such and such means at your disposal, he could hardly have laid out his life differently. To mistake neither one's powers nor one's opportunities is a felicity which happens to few; and Gibbon had the additional good fortune that even his distractions seem to have been useful. The interruption to his Oxford education made him a cosmopolitan; his service with the volunteers helped him to be a military historian; and even his parliamentary career which threatened to absorb him only gave to the student the tone of a practical politician. It seems as though everything had been expressly combined to make the best of him.

What more could be desired by a man of Gibbon's temperament? Undoubtedly to be a man of Gibbon's temperament is to have a moderate capacity for certain forms of happiness. In the lives of most great men the history of a conversion is a record of heart-rending struggle, ending in hard-won peace. Gibbon merely changed his religion as he changed his opinion upon some antiquarian controversy; it is a question as to the weight of historical evidence, like the question about the sixth *Æneid*, or a dispute about the genealogy of the House of Brunswick. Whatever pangs and raptures may require religious susceptibility were

clearly not within his range of feeling. And in another great department of feeling we need not inquire into the character of the author of the inimitable sentence, "I sighed as a lover, I obeyed as a son." One is tempted to put it beside a remark which he makes on another occasion, "I yielded to the authority of a parent, and complied, like a pious son, with the wish of my own heart." Perhaps the heart which sanctioned his filial obedience in the latter case was not so opposed to it in the other as he would have us believe. It is better worth noting, however, that in spite of the very tepid disposition, illustrated by these familiar passages, Gibbon has affections as warm as are compatible with thorough comfort. He was not a passionate lover; and we cannot say, for he was not tried, that his friendship was of an heroic strain; but he had a very good supply of such affections as are wanted for the ordinary wear and tear of life—to provide a man with enough interests and sympathies to make society pleasant, and his family life agreeable. Nay, he seems to have been really generous and considerate beyond the ordinary pitch, and to have been a faithful friend, and excellent in some very delicate relationships. For a statesman, a religious teacher, or a poet, much stronger equipment in this direction might be desirable. But Gibbon had warmth enough to keep up a pleasant fireside, if not enough to fire the hearts of a nation. He clearly had enough passion for his historical vocation. A more 'passionate and imaginative person would hardly have written it at all. It requires a certain moderation of character to be satisfied with a history instead of a wife, and Gibbon was so great an historian because he could accept such a substitute. No one capable of being a partisan could have preserved that stately march and equable development of the vast drama of human affairs which gives a monumental dignity to his great book. Even if you do not want to write another *Decline and Fall*, is not such a disposition the most enviable of gifts? If such a life has less vivid passages, is there not something fascinating about that calm, harmonious existence, disturbed by no spasmodic storms, and yet devoted to one achievement grand enough to extort admiration even from the least sympathetic? Surely it is a happy mean: enough genius to be in the front rank, if not in the highest class, and yet that kind of genius which has no affinity to madness or disease, and virtue enough to keep up to the respectable level which justifies a comfortable self-complacency without suggesting any awkward deviations in the direction of martyrdom. That is surely the kind of composition which a man might desire if he were to calculate what character would give him the best chance of extracting the greatest possible amount of enjoyment out of life. Luckily for the world, if not for its heroes, men's characters cannot be fixed by such calculations; and a certain number of perverse people are even glad to possess vehement emotions and restless intellects, however conscious that the fiery soul will wear out the pigmy body. We try to persuade ourselves that they are not only choosing the noblest part, but acting most wisely for their own interests. It may be so; for

the problem is a complex one. But it has not yet been proved that a man can always make the best of both worlds, and that the sacrifices imposed by virtue are always repaid in this life. Certainly it seems doubtful, when we have studied the self-written records of remarkable men, whether experience will confirm that pleasant record; whether it is not more probable that for simple employment it is not best to have one's nature pitched in a key below the highest. Most of us would make a very fair compromise if we should abandon our loftier claims on condition of being no worse than Gibbon.

Nightingale and Cuckoo.

O NIGHTINGALE and cuckoo! it was meet
That you should come together; for ye twain
Are emblems of the rapture and the pain
That in the April of our life compete,
Until we know not which is the more sweet,
Nor yet have learned that both of them are vain!
Yet why, O nightingale! break off thy strain,
While yet the cuckoo doth his call repeat?
Not so with me. To sweet woe did I cling
Long after echoing happiness was dead,
And so found solace. Now, alas! the sting!
Cuckoo and nightingale alike have fled;
Neither for joy nor sorrow do I sing,
And autumn silence gathers in their stead.

ALFRED AUSTIN.

The Youth of Henry the Fifth.

WITHIN the latter half of this century historical subjects have gradually been re-written. Evidence not before possessed by the writers of a previous generation is now freely laid open and diligently explored. Our national documents and state papers are no longer excluded from the research of the student, whilst our landed gentry are doing their best to further this spirit of inquiry by permitting their papers to be examined by the Historical MSS. Commission. The result of these advantages is now apparent in the teaching of our modern historians. Events which, with their dates, we have carefully committed to memory in the days of our youth, are proved never to have taken place. Characters whom we have been accustomed to regard as the most depraved of the family of human nature are now shown to be possessed of every virtue that tombstones record ; whilst on the other hand those whom we were taught to imitate and respect have been contemptuously kicked down from their lofty pedestal of moral superiority. Indeed, the amount that an elderly gentleman, given to the study of history, has to unlearn at the present day, is no little strain upon his intellectual faculties. He has to dismiss from his mind our old friend the Anglo-Saxon, and the ancient form of spelling men and things previous to the period of Domesday, unless he wishes to court the wrath of Mr. E. A. Freeman ; accustomed only to remember the Constitutions of Clarendon and the more important clauses of Magna Charta, he has now to acquire any amount of new laws from the Charters of Canon Stubbs ; Mr. William Longman gives him a new reading of the reign of our third Edward ; when he comes to that wicked uncle Richard and the story of Perkin Warbeck he must put away his Hume and see what Mr. Gairdner has to say upon the subject ; he must disabuse his mind as to all former prejudices with regard to our historical Bluebeard, and look upon bluff King Hal as a strictly moral character and a man of strong domestic affections ; the glorious reign of Elizabeth he will come to the conclusion has been much overrated, whilst the persecutions of her sister exist only in the spiteful imagination of certain Protestant bigots. He may take his choice as to Mary Stuart and our first Charles, since history cannot make up her mind about them, and the arguments for and against appear pretty evenly balanced, but William the Deliverer he is bound to look upon as one of the greatest, wisest, most sublime of mankind. About Anne and the

Georges he will also have much to unlearn. But perhaps what will astonish our sexagenarian friend the most in his studies will be, thanks to this spirit of modern research, the rehabilitation of historical characters. The wickedness of sovereigns like John, Richard III., and Henry VIII. has, it is now asserted, been much exaggerated. The haughty Strafford was, it now turns out, rather an advocate of parliamentary institutions than otherwise. Cromwell was not the base levelling regicide imagination assumes him, but a man really attached to the monarchical system. Sir Robert Walpole did *not* bribe. The burly Duke of Cumberland was a kindly, humane man, and the butcheries reported of him at Culloden are only so many foul libels circulated by the Jacobites. If his character be studied aright, Lord Eldon was anything but a dilatory judge; on the contrary at times he was even hasty in his decisions. Addington was many removes from being a political mediocrity; both Pitt and Canning, in fact, held him in high esteem. The mind of Sir Robert Peel was keenly original, and it is calumny to assert that that eminent statesman was the clever pilferer of the ideas of other people. And so on.

To one important personage let us apply this process of whitewashing. Harry of Monmouth, who afterwards developed into the hero of Agincourt, has long been looked upon as the wild young man of history. He is the prototype of the loose youth, to be found in every generation, who anticipates his patrimony, who is given to loose company, who boxes the watch, who awakes the silent streets with his midnight brawls, who offers rude caresses to modest dames, and who, whilst posing as a Corinthian, is in reality little better than a Mohock. We read of him in the pages of Shakespeare and in the parchments of chronicles as the friend of sack-sodden Falstaff and his dissolute crew, as the rollicking roysterer of Eastcheap, now robbing purses at Gadshill, and then serving as an amateur tapster at the Boar's Head Tavern, occupying his leisure in flirtations with such choice specimens of their sex as Mistress Quickly and Doll Tearsheet, and throughout the whole period of his probation as heir-apparent leading the *vie orageuse* of open debauchery, until at last justice herself seizes him, in spite of his lineage, and sends him to gaol. Is this a true picture of the youth of our fifth Henry? When we place gossip and dramatic effect on one side, and examine these charges by the cold, pure light of evidence, are they capable of being substantiated? May the wild revelries of Harry of Monmouth be after all only such exaggerations as invariably attend upon the misdeeds of those in high places? Let us proceed to inquire whether the mole-hill has not been magnified into a mountain and the disturbance in the tea-cup into a raging tempest.

The madcap Harry of Shakespeare was the son of Henry of Bolingbroke, the son of John of Gaunt, and Mary, daughter of Humphrey Bohun, Earl of Hereford, and was born according to the chroniclers at Monmouth, August 9, 1387. Like so many men who have afterwards

distinguished themselves by prowess in the field, he was a delicate child, and to benefit by the better air was sent from Monmouth Castle to Courtfield, a village some seven miles distant, where he was carefully tended by the Marchioness of Salisbury. From the archives of the duchy of Lancaster we gather a few entries touching matters connected with his childhood; we read of "a long gown for the young lord Henry," and of "an ell of canvas" for his cradle; how his nurse was Joan Waring, on whom, shortly after his accession, he settled an annuity of twenty pounds, "in consideration of good service done to him in former days," and how in the spring of 1395 he was attacked by a dangerous illness. Then as he became a boy and put away childish things we see how the tastes of the lad foreshadowed the man, for we meet with such entries as these: "twelve pence to Stephen Furbour for a new scabbard of a sword for young lord Henry," and again, "one and sixpence for three fourths of an ounce of tissue of black silk bought at London of Margaret Stanson for a sword of the young lord Henry;" also "eight pence paid by the hands of Adam Garston for harpstrings purchased for the harp of the young lord Henry." Of minstrelsy Henry V. was always passionately fond, and from the Norman Rolls, the contents of which, after centuries of delay, it has been part of my official labours recently to make public, we learn that almost immediately after the landing of the king in Normandy one of his first requests was to commission "Thomas Walshe to procure workmen from London to make harps" for the royal amusement during the campaign.

The education of the future prince was not neglected, for we come across a charge of "four shillings for seven books of grammar contained in one volume and bought at London for the young lord Henry." On attaining the age of eleven the lad was entered at Queen's College, Oxford, and there studied under his paternal uncle Henry Beaufort, then Chancellor of the University. Since the youths of those days who were destined to the profession of arms had to take the field before the age of fifteen, the stay of Henry at Alma Mater was very brief, for we find him on the following year accompanying King Richard to Ireland. He was now to all intents and purposes an orphan. Shortly before going up to Oxford he had lost his mother, to whom he was deeply attached, and whose memory he ever cherished with filial tenderness. We read in the Pell Rolls that two months after his accession to the throne, in order to testify his grateful remembrance of her, he paid a sum of money "in advance to William Goodyere, for newly devising and making an image in likeness of the mother of the present lord the king, ornamented with divers arms of the kings of England, and placed over the tomb of the said king's mother within the king's college at Leicester, where she is buried and entombed." His father, at the very moment when about to enter the lists in deadly combat against one who had thrown doubts upon his veracity, had suddenly been sentenced to exile for ten years. Thus deprived of a mother's love and a father's control, Richard took

charge of the lad, and to prevent him from scheming to avenge the wrongs of his sire, forced him to accompany the expedition sent across St. George's Channel to subdue the Irish chieftain Macmore. The Pell Rolls* of this date show that the boy was in the pay of the crown, for they record this entry "ten pounds to Henry, son of the Duke of Hereford (Bolingbroke had been created Duke of Hereford by Richard) in part payment of five hundred pounds yearly, which our present lord the king has granted to be paid him at the Exchequer during pleasure." Whilst on the march against the enemy, the king conferred the honour of knighthood upon his young charge. "My fair cousin," said he, "henceforth be gallant and bold; for unless you conquer you will have little name for valour." Richard, however, offered Henry few opportunities of distinguishing himself in the Emerald Isle, for he soon gave up the pursuit of Macmore, preferring the comfort and luxury of Dublin to the damp and privations in the bogs. His repose was, however, rudely dispelled by the news brought to his court that Henry of Monmouth's father, now Duke of Lancaster by the death of "time-honoured Gaunt," had invaded England and had claimed the kingdom as his own.† On hearing this intelligence, Richard turned towards the young knight who was by his side and said, "Henry, my child, see what your father has done to me. He has actually invaded my land as an enemy, and as if in regular warfare has taken captive and put to death my liege subjects without mercy or pity. Indeed, child, for you individually I am very sorry, because for this unhappy proceeding of your father you must, perhaps, be deprived of your inheritance." To whom, according to the chronicler Otterbourne, Henry thus replied: "In truth, my gracious king and lord, I am sincerely grieved by these tidings; but I conceive you are fully assured of my innocence in this proceeding of my father." "I know," answered the king, "that the crime which your father has perpetrated does not attach at all to you; and therefore I hold you excused of it altogether." The result of this invasion is well known. The people gave in their adherence to the Duke of Lancaster. Richard crossed over

* The Pell Rolls, so called from the pells or skins, on rolls of which accounts of the Royal receipts and expenditure used to be preserved, have been edited by the late F. Devon, of the Record Office. Mr. Tyler, some forty years ago, was the first to direct attention to these rolls in his careful *Life of Henry V.*, a book now seldom to be met with.

† Before Henry Bolingbroke's departure from England, the king, to conciliate John of Gaunt, had remitted four years of his son's banishment, the original sentence being for ten years, from October 13, 1398; but no sooner was the Duke of Lancaster dead than Richard, throwing off all semblance of moderation, exiled Bolingbroke for life, and confiscated his property, dividing it amongst the royal favourites. On the Patent Rolls of the time are several grants of these estates to the Duke of Surrey and others. This robbery determined the young Duke of Lancaster to return to England to claim his inheritance, and finding the occasion favourable, he seized upon the crown as interest.

from Ireland, the army deserted the royal standard, and the king was taken prisoner and carried to London. Lancaster now claimed the throne, a deed was drawn up, and Richard was forced to resign. A few months after his deposition the king passed to his rest; whether by violence or by natural causes we know not, for the story that he was foully murdered is based on insufficient evidence.

Immediately upon his accession the Duke of Lancaster, now Henry IV., sent over to Ireland for his son who, for safer keeping, was in honourable custody within the walls of Trym Castle. In the Pell Rolls we read the following entry: "to Henry Dryhurst of West Chester, payment for the freightage of a ship to Dublin; also for sailing to the same place and back again, to conduct the lord the prince, the king's son, from Ireland to England, together with the furniture of a chapel and ornaments of the same, which belonged to King Richard." At the coronation of his father Henry stood at the right of the throne, holding in his hand, in virtue of the duchy of Lancaster, the blunted sword called Curtana, which had belonged to Edward the Confessor. On this occasion he was created Prince of Wales, and the estates swore "the same faith, loyalty, aid, assistance, and fealty" to him as they did to his father. The honour was no empty one, for shortly afterwards the Council granted him a household suitable to his new position, placing at his disposal "chapels, chambers, halls, wardrobe, pantry, buttery, kitchen, scullery, saucery, almonry, anointry, and generally all things requisite for his establishment." The heir-apparent appears by all accounts to have grown out of the delicacy which characterised his early days. He is described, though only in his twelfth year, as "a handsome young bachelor," and as "exceeding the ordinary stature of men." We are told that he was skilled in all athletic exercises, and so swift a runner that "he could on foot readily give chase to a deer without hounds, bow, or sling, and catch the fleetest of the herd," a lie, we hope, big enough to satisfy even a mediæval chronicler. His face was handsome and lit up with an intelligence which his subsequent acts certainly did not refute. His portrait at the time of his accession is thus sketched in Latin verse which "every schoolboy" can translate:

Formæ regalis descriptio fit manifesta,
 Quæ sequitur talis. Capitis sibi spherica testa,
 Magniconsilii signumque viri sapientis.
 Hæc est principii bona res, laus prima regentis,
 Signat frons plana Regis quod mens bene sana.
 Plani sunt illi, bruni, densique capilli,
 Nasus directus, facies extensa decenter;
 Floridus aspectus et amabilis est reverenter.
 Clare lucentes oculi subrube patentes,
 Pace columbini, sed in ira sunt leonini.
 Sunt nivei dentes, æqualiter et residentes,
 Formula parvarum que decens est auricularum;
 Et mentum fissum, collum satis undique spissum,

Concurrente nota, cutis ejus candida tota.
 Non sunt inflatæ fauces, albedine gratæ,
 Quarum pars rosea, sed labia coccinea.
 Sunt bene formata sua membraque consolidata
 Ossibus et nervis, sine signis ipsa protervis.*

In those warlike days youths began life early, and Prince Henry, a lad who in these more effeminate times would scarcely have been out of the nursery, was to be no exception to the rule. Owen Glendower, who claimed to be descended from the Princes of Wales, and whose estates had been seized by Lord Grey de Ruthyn, had risen up in rebellion, and recovered possession of his property by the sword. Henry Percy, the eldest son of the Earl of Northumberland, better known as Hotspur, was then Chief Justice of North Wales and Chester, and Constable of the Castles of Chester, Flint, Conway, and Caernarvon. He at once exerted himself to suppress the revolt, and at the same time the young Prince of Wales was despatched west to defend his own principality. The letters of Hotspur to the council edited by the late Sir H. Nicolas, describe the conduct of Henry during the campaign, and bear witness to the high estimation in which he was, in spite of his tender age, then held. In that correspondence we read how Hotspur calls Henry "his most honoured and redoubted prince," how he praises his courage and his clemency, and how the commons of North Wales "have humbly offered their thanks to my lord the prince for the great exertions of his kindness and good-will in procuring their pardon at the hands of our sovereign lord the king." We read how the prince marched his men against Glendower, set fire to his park and mansion, and wasted the country for miles around; how hard up he was to pay the archers and men-at-arms, for he thus moans: "and at present we have very great expenses, and we have raised the largest sum in our power to meet them from our little stock of jewels;" and how, as the king's deputy in Wales, he stands sorely in need of assistance. Whilst these events were taking place, the boy who was thus nominally placed at the head of affairs was about fourteen years of age.

We know how the bard of Avon portrays the career of the prince at this time:—

His addiction was to courses vain;
 His companies unlettered, rude, and shallow;
 His hours filled up with riots, banquets, sports;
 And never noted in him any study,
 Any retirement, any sequestration
 From open haunts and popularity.

The object of Shakespeare was to write a good play: he consulted the ordinary sources of information, and it was not his province to examine them as to their accuracy. Provided they furnished him with materials for effect he was content; he was a dramatic poet, not an historian. The first occasion when Henry appears upon the Shakesperian scene is

* Versus Rhythmici de Henrico Quinto; supposed to have been written by a monk attached to the household.

not very complimentary to himself.* His father asks of Percy and other lords whether they can tell him anything of his "unthrifty son," as he would to heaven he could be found :—

Inquire at London, 'mongst the taverns there,
For there, they say, he daily doth frequent,
With unrestrained loose companions;
Even such, they say, as stand in narrow lanes,
And beat our watch, or rob our passengers;
While he, young wanton, and effeminate boy
Takes on the point of honour to support
So dissolute a crew.

To descend from poetry to the facts of prose; when this speech was delivered this "young wanton," lording it over his dissolute crew, was a mere boy; the "unthrifty son" had nothing to be unthrifty upon; and so far from the father thinking that the son would be a disgrace to his name and race, the youth had been created Prince of Wales, with every tribute of homage and affection. Nor is the second occasion when Shakespeare honours Prince Henry with his dramatic muse a whit more favourable to his subject, or less incorrect in its details.† The battle of Homildon had been fought, and great was the glory of the Percies, and especially of Harry Hotspur. King Henry contrasts the brave young son of Northumberland with his own unhappy child, who, all infant though he be, is said to be drinking sack with Falstaff, reeling about the streets of Eastcheap, and chucking Mistress Quickly under the chin—and if that dame had spanked him and put him to bed, methinks the proprieties would not have been grievously outraged. Westmoreland, with all a father's pride at the victory of his son over the Scots, cries :—

Faith! 'tis a conquest for a prince to boast of.

At which thus sighs King Henry, the parent of the infant prodigal :—

Yea; there thou makest me sad, and makest me sin
In envy that my lord Northumberland
Should be the father of so blest a son,
Whilst I, by looking on the praise of him,
See riot and dishonour stain the brow
Of my young Harry. O that it could be proved
That some night-tripping fairy had exchanged
In cradle-clothes our children where they lay,
And called mine Percy, his Plantagenet;
Then I would have his Harry, and he mine!
But let him from my thoughts.

Had this wish been granted, the king would have presented the somewhat curious physiological spectacle of a man having a son as old as himself. The object of Shakespeare is to create a dramatic contrast.

* *Richard II.* Act v. scene 3.

† *Henry IV.* Part I. Act i. scene 1.

Hotspur and Henry, the poet assumes, are the same age; Hotspur is the type of heroic, Henry of dissolute, youth; the one is a father's pride, the other a father's disgrace. Again, what are the prosaic facts? Prince Henry was born August 1387; his father, Henry Bolingbroke, was born April 1366, and Hotspur was born in the October of the same year. So that when the "divine William" talks of "our children" lying in their "cradle clothes," one of those bairns must have at least been in a very uncomfortable position, considering that he was a bouncing young man of one-and-twenty! The "night-tripping" fairy could hardly have effected such an exchange without discovery; it may be a wise son that knows his own father, but it must have been a very foolish parent indeed who, under those circumstances, failed to recognise his own offspring. And pray what had this unhappy subject of Shakesperian diatribe done to cause the author of his being to mourn his birth? We know nothing of the "Boar's Head," Eastcheap, and the rest of it; all we know and all that history teaches us is, that at this very time when Henry IV. is made to lament the shortcomings of his son, that very son was scouring Glendower's country and winning golden opinions as the Lord Deputy of Wales. He was not wasting his substance upon dissolute companions, but, on the contrary, as we see from his letters to the council, he was pawning his jewels and melting his plate to pay the arrears of his troops. But *que voulez-vous?* if you have imagination, you must use it.

On the revolt of the Percies, Henry, who was then in command on the Welsh borders, formed a junction with his father, and was present at the "sorry battle of Shrewsbury." Here he behaved himself with the lion-hearted courage which was afterwards so eminently his characteristic. Though wounded in the face by an arrow, he refused to be led to the rear. "My lords," he cried, "far be from me such disgrace as that, like a poltroon, I should stain my noviciate in arms by retreat! If the prince flies, who will wait to end the battle? Believe it, to be carried back before victory would be to me perpetual death! Lead on, I implore you, to the very face of the foe. I may not say to my friends, 'Go ye on first to the fight.' Be it mine to say, 'Follow me, my friends.'" The personal conflict between Henry and Hotspur, which is told with such dramatic effect by our great bard, has no existence in fact. Hotspur fell by an unknown hand, and his death was the signal for the flight and utter collapse of his followers. This rebellion—which had been inspired by the very man whom Shakspeare makes the king wish had been substituted for his own son—now completely crushed by the victory at Shrewsbury, the Prince of Wales returned to his original quarters to check the movements of the terrible Glendower, who was now being assisted by the French. The rebel Welsh were carrying all before them, ravaging the country, killing the inhabitants, and surmounting all obstacles, while the royal troops lacked supplies, reinforcements, and money. The letters of the prince describe the situation of affairs. "The Welsh," he writes, or the tutor who was with him writes,

"have made a descent on Herefordshire, burning and destroying also the county, with very great force, and with a supply of provisions for fifteen days. And true it is that they have burnt and made very great havoc on the borders of the said county; but, since my arrival in these parts, I have heard of no further damage from them, God be thanked! . . . I will do all I possibly can to resist the rebels, and save the English country to the utmost of my little power, as God shall give me grace; ever trusting in your high Majesty to remember my poor estate, and that I have not the means of continuing here without the adoption of some other measures for my maintenance, and that the expenses are insupportable to me." The Welsh, furnished with men and supplies from France, declined to be intimidated, and the condition of the prince became grave. "We implore you," writes this 'unthrifty son,' "to make some ordinance for us in time, assured that we have nothing from which we can support ourselves here, except that we have pawned our little plate and jewels, and raised money from them, and with that we shall be able to remain only a short time. And after that, unless you make provision for us, we shall be compelled to depart with disgrace and mischief, and the country will be utterly destroyed, which God forbid!" This request was only half attended to; the king, what with the Lollards, the Scotch, and the agitation created by Northumberland, had too much upon his hands to devote his whole time and substance to effectually crushing Glendower; and, as we know, the Welsh leader continued to make himself singularly disagreeable for some years after the death of Henry IV.

So far as we can gather from the scanty notices of the prince recorded by history, the young heir-apparent spent the next few years partly in his command in Wales, and partly in London. Princes are but mortal men, and as their lofty station subjects them to greater temptations than ordinary individuals, more allowance should be made for their shortcomings; we should remember not only how they fall, but also how much they must have to resist. It is not my object here to endeavour to portray Prince Henry as the most immaculate of youths, and the type of juvenile purity in thought or action. He may have led the usual life of his class and age, or he may have not; we possess no direct evidence upon the subject. What evidence we can collect is, however, entirely in the favour of the prince, and utterly opposed to the Shakesperian view of his having been a loose tavern-haunting young cad before he was called to the throne. His courage was high, his instincts manly, and on the few public occasions when he had to assert his position, his sense of dignity and self-respect was very conspicuous; lads of such a temperament are seldom given to low revelries. At all events, we have the following testimony to his conduct when he was a young man of nineteen. Early in the summer of 1406, the Rolls of Parliament record a memorable address made by the Speaker to the king, seated on his royal throne. This personage was John Tibetot, and in the course of his oration he commends "the

many excellencies and virtues" which habitually dwell in the person of the prince; he lauds his "humility and obedience" to his father, "so that there can be no person of any degree whatever who entertains or shows more honour and reverence of humbleness and obedience to his father than he shows in his honourable person;" he admits the "good heart and courage" with which his Royal Highness has been endowed, and, lastly, both he and the nation have such perfect confidence in the judgment and discretion of the prince, that his Majesty is prayed by the Houses to have him legally acknowledged as the heir-apparent to the throne. Had Henry been the boon companion of sots, the frequenter of stews, and the openly profligate son of historical comedy, the Speaker, blind and servile as was the toadyism of those days, would hardly have alluded to him in such complimentary terms. Yet at the very time that History enrols this parliamentary praise, Shakspeare, not troubling himself about premises and authorities, is making King Henry bitterly reproach his son for his vulgar debaucheries* :—

I know not whether God will have it so,
 For some displeasing service I have done,
 That, in his secret doom, out of my blood
 He breeds revengement and a scourge for me.
 But thou dost, in thy passages of life,
 Make me believe that thou art only marked
 For the hot vengeance and the rod of heaven,
 To punish my mistreadings. Tell me else,
 Could such inordinate and low desires,
 Such barren, base, such lewd, such mean attempts,
 Such barren pleasures, rude society,
 As thou art matched withal and grafted to,
 Accompany the greatness of thy blood,
 And hold their level with thy princely heart?
 Thy place in council thou hast rudely lost,
 Which by thy younger brother is supplied;
 And art almost an alien to the hearts
 Of all the court and princes of my blood.

We think, however, we can understand how the bard has gone so hopelessly astray in his facts. When William Cobbett was attacked by a political opponent as to the accuracy of his statements, he was wont to accuse his adversary of having the wrong sow by the ear; so in this case we may accuse Shakspeare of having the wrong sow by the ear. Among the appointments conferred by the king upon his son were those of the Captaincy of Calais, and the Presidency of the Council. At the same time as he advanced Henry to these posts, he gave him his own house, called Coldharbour, which was near Eastcheap. Here the prince frequently resided, and here he held his council. It also appears, according to Stowe, that the brothers of Henry, the Princes Thomas and John, no doubt whilst on a visit to Coldharbour, sallied forth into Eastcheap late one night, when they had supped freely (the mediæval equivalent for

* 1 *Henry IV.*, Act iii. sc. 1.

"having dined"), and got into a brawl with the townsmen; the matter was brought before the Chief Justice William Gascoigne, and then taken up to the king, who at once quashed it. From this simple fact cannot we trace the workings and distortions of the poetical imagination? Coldharbour is hard by Eastcheap, in Eastcheap is a well-known hostel; at this hostel numerous brawls arise; two sons of the king were once engaged in a city brawl, *therefore* so was the heir-apparent, therefore he was a frequent visitor at the Boar's Head, and therefore he spent his youth in riotous living and all uncleanness! It is true the premises are somewhat shaky, and the deductions rather jumped at, but, as we said before, of what service is imagination unless you use it?

Nor is the venerable story of the prince and the Chief Justice a whit more to be credited than the rest of the Shakesperian statements concerning madcap Harry! From the well-furnished armoury of Mr. Tyler, who in his now scarce book has carefully examined the evidence upon this subject, let us select a few arrows to let fly at the romancists. It is said that a favourite servant of the prince had been committed for felony, and was arraigned at the bar of the King's Bench to take his trial. Indignant at such treatment being passed upon one of his household, Henry came down in hot haste to Westminster, where the prisoner was standing fettered at the bar, and commanded the Lord Chief Justice at once to give orders to have the man "ungyved and set at liberty." With all dignity, yet with all reverence, the Lord Chief Justice "exhorted the prince to be contented that his servant might be ordered according to the ancient laws of this realm; or, if he would have him saved from the rigour of the laws, that he should obtain, if he might, from the king his father his gracious pardon, whereby no law or justice should be derogate." This suggestion the prince declined to accept; and, rushing to the dock, began of his own accord to set the accused menial free. Sternly the judge commanded the young man to desist from his attempt and quit the court, but in vain. Henry "all chafed and in a terrible manner" turned upon the Bench and made as if he would attack the representative of the law himself. The judge never flinched, but, bending forward, and raising his hand in menace, said: "Sir, remember yourself. I keep here the place of the king your sovereign lord and father, to whom ye owe double obedience; wherefore eftsoons in his name I charge you desist of your wilfulness and unlawful enterprise, and from henceforth give good example to those which hereafter shall be your proper subjects. And now, for your contempt and disobedience, go you to the prison of King's Bench, whereunto I commit you; and remain ye there prisoner until the pleasure of the king your father be further known." Abashed, the prince withdrew, and went to gaol as he had been commanded. When the news reached the king, he raised his eyes towards Heaven, and in the presence of his court exclaimed, "O merciful God, how much am I above other men bound to your infinite goodness, specially that ye have given me a judge who feareth not

to minister justice, and also a son who can suffer semblably and obey justice!" Every reader of Shakespeare knows what dramatic capital the poet makes out of this incident.

Upon what authority does this story rest? It is not mentioned or alluded to in the chronicle of any contemporary, or in the parchments of our public records. If such an event ever occurred, it would have been set forth upon the membranes of our Close or Patent Rolls, but those documents are silent upon the subject. As a matter of fact, this incident is not even mentioned until Henry VIII. had been seated upon the throne some twenty years, nearly a century and a half after the occurrence is said to have taken place. In 1534, one Sir Thomas Elyot wrote a book entitled *The Governor*, which he dedicated to the king, and in which he narrates the story of "madcap Harry and the old judge," very much as I have told it. He gives no authority for his facts, he does not make a single reference to any contemporary evidence, yet compilers, with the credulity of their class, have accepted his statements as gospel, and have transferred the anecdote to their pages one after the other without a moment's hesitation or examination. Sir John Hawkins cites it in his *Pleas of the Crown*; Hall quotes it and embellishes it by making the prince strike the Chief Justice "with his fist on his face;" Shakespeare follows suit; Hume, who candidly admitted that he "found it easier to consult printed books than to spend my time over manuscripts," copies from Hall; and so the ball keeps rolling, and thus history is written. No wonder Sir Robert Walpole said, "Read me anything but history, for that I know is full of lies!" Such a startling fact as the committal of the heir-apparent to prison would hardly have escaped the biographers of the prince who lived a century nearer his time than Elyot. Yet Elmham, Livius, Otterbourne, Hardyng, Walsingham, and the rest, who record the pettiest events in the young man's life, are all silent upon this grave matter. The story rests, and rests alone, upon the authority of Sir Thomas Elyot; and since Sir Thomas has contented himself with describing this all-important incident without condescending to give a single reference to justify his assertion, we cannot be considered as foolishly incredulous in declining to place any faith whatever in his statement. On the accession of Henry V., Chief Justice Gascoigne was not confirmed in his post, but was succeeded on the bench by Haukford. From this fact the maligners of the prince have come to the conclusion that the new king, mindful of the insult passed upon him when heir-apparent, took the first opportunity of revenging himself by dismissing the judge. There are no grounds for this suggestion. Gascoigne had been Chief Justice for the last twelve years—an unusually long period in those days—and it is not unreasonable to suppose that ill-health, or a natural wish for retirement, had more to do with his withdrawal from the King's Bench than the resentment of his sovereign. That the king entertained no ill-will to the late judge is conclusively proved by the following warrant among the public records. For on

November 28, 1414, the very year after the retirement of the Chief Justice, we find this grant from Henry V.: "to our dear and well-beloved William Gascoigne an allowance of four bucks and does out of the forest of Pontefract for the term of his life." Gascoigne died December 17, 1419, and not, as has been generally supposed, on December 17, 1413.

We have but one more charge to investigate as to the antecedents of this much calumniated royal youth. Every student of Shakspeare remembers the fine passages in the "chamber scene,"* when Henry the king is on his deathbed, and the young prince, in a hurry to claim his new honour, tries on the crown before the due moment has arrived, and is upbraided by his moribund parent for this indecent haste. Historians and compilers, basing their labours upon this incident, have narrated in their pages that during the latter years of King Henry IV.'s reign there was a feud between sire and son, the son desiring to get the power of the crown into his own hands, and being guilty of gross insubordination to his father. We have no evidence, beyond the "heedless rhetoric" of compilers, who follow one another like a flock of sheep, the most credulous of the lot being the bell-wether, for this estrangement. Upon the membranes of the public records of the realm we find nothing to justify the assertions that there were jealousies between the prince and the members of his family, that the king was alienated from him, and, finally, that the monarch became so jealous of the prince's popularity with the people, that he ended by excluding the young man altogether from the affairs of government. On the contrary, all the evidence we possess goes to prove that father and son were on the most excellent terms; that in the acts of council the name of the prince was always associated with that of the king, that what the prince suggested was approved of by his parent, and that on the death of Henry IV. his last hours were cheered by the devotion and affection of his son. In the king's will we find him writing of the prince—the prince who had been so wilful and disorderly, and who was so greedily eager to come into his kingdom!—as follows: "And for to execute this testament well and truly, *for the great trust that I have of my son the prince*, I ordain and make him my executor of my testament aforesaid, calling to him," &c. Year after year, from the very date when the prince was first appointed to office, down to the time of the king's death, we come across entries upon the rolls of the kingdom proving that the son was in council with his father, and enjoyed his confidence and affection. These entries, though few in number, are new; and, as they have been hunted up by me with some little trouble, their insertion here may not be out of place. At least they prove that the king and the heir-apparent were not estranged from each other:—

November 18, 1409. Grant to Henry, Prince of Wales, of 500 marks yearly for the custody of Edmund, Earl of March, and his brother.

* 2 *Henry IV.*, Act iv. sc. 4.

March 18, 1410. Grant to Henry, Prince of Wales, of the house called Coldherbergh (Coldharbour), in the city of London.

March 18, 1410. Henry, Prince of Wales, appointed Captain of Calais, vice John, Earl of Somerset, deceased.

March 23, 1410. The king's officers and subjects ordered to obey the Prince of Wales as Captain of Calais.

June 10, 1411. Appointment of the Captain of Calais as conservator of the truce between England and Burgundy for the security of the merchants of England and Flanders.

May 1, 1412. Mandate from the king to the Prince of Wales, Constable of Dover and Warden of the Cinque Ports, to summon the barons of the ports to provide the service of ships.

March 11, 1412. The king orders the Prince of Wales to publish the truce with Flanders.

July 12, 1412. Appointment of the prince as one of the conservators of the truce with Flanders.

Henry IV. expired March 20, 1413. Thus from 1409 to within a few months of the king's death, we find the prince associated with his father in affairs of government, and holding communication with him as one of the representatives of the Crown.

"Give a dog a bad name, and you may as lief hang him," is the proverb, which not inaptly describes the youthful character of this prince. Henry of Monmouth has the bad name of history as being the wildest and most dissipated of royal youths, and therefore, until he succeeds to the throne, everything that is adverse to his favour may be credited. Yet, after carefully investigating his career, both when he was heir-apparent and when he was sovereign, we have little hesitation in asserting that he was as discreet and unimpeachable in his conduct as a prince, as he proved himself wise and blameless when called to the throne. On the one side we have evidence that cannot be disputed as to his character, whilst on the other we have but the malice of hearsay and the situations conceived by the dramatic poet.

ALEX. CHARLES EWALD.

Timasitheos.

O FOR the gift to rise in full degree,
 Not like the showy fungus of a night,
 But fed with soft delays, a branching tree !

Where now Olympia struggles to the light
 All ruin, a sacred city long profaned,
 Pausanias found amid the shining flight

Of brilliant statues, all unspecked, unstained,
 One hewed about the face, and marred with mire,
 Still standing as by right, but deep disdained ;

And when the curious wanderer would inquire
 Whose beauteous antique shape was soiled and shamed,
 None there could tell save one white-bearded sire,

Who answered : " This was one who, never tamed,
 With his swift thews won race on flashing race,
 Lightly ; Timasitheos was he named,

" The Delphian, and from Phœbus so much grace
 He had, that all the Arcadian world extolled
 His manhood and the glory of his face ;

" And from the lips of Stesichorus rolled
 Madness of song, praising his brazen feet,
 And tight curls closing like the marigold ;

" And Argive Ageladas, as was meet,
 Master of Pheidias, sculptured him, and set
 His statue in the ranks of strong and fleet ;

" And three times at the Pythian games he met
 The athletes in the sinewy lists, and won,
 And through the dewy streets and meadows wet,

"Went singing, crowned from the pancration,
To Delphi, in a long procession borne,
And met with songs, his city's dearest son."

"Then why," Pausanias cried, "this mien forlorn,
These injured garments, this dishonoured head,
Of all its light and carven beauty shorn?"

To whom the old indifferent grey-beard said :

"'Twas long ago, before my grandsires' days,
And he who knew our history best is dead.

"But see this dim and grey inscription says :—
'Timasitheos, traitor to the state,
Lift up with pride and fallen on godless ways,

"'By his fond physical strength intoxicate,
Plotted with Kylon, and so meanly fell,
Unstable, and the prey of envious fate.'"

Too soon, too much adored! Ah! much too well
He cleft the winds and left the world behind!
Too fatal all the shapely miracle

Of his great limbs in faultless form combined!
Better, ah! better far to have been less swift,
More kindred to the earth, less to the wind!

For the gods hate not excellence, but lift
The strong soul slowly on a great endeavour,
And grace their own beloved, gift by gift,

And with their sleepless eyes have wit to sever
Man's lawful joy in power from pride of power,
And hover round the loyal soul for ever;

But the hot insolent head they hold one hour
High over the ranks of men, then dash it down,
And laugh to see it kiss the dust and cower.

Let others leap straight to the forest-crown!
Slow growth, cool saps and temperate airs for me,
And strength to stand when all the woods are brown.

Winter Nights at Dabos.

(LEAVES FROM THE DIARY OF AN INVALID.)

I.

LIGHT marvellously soft yet penetrating; everywhere diffused; everywhere reflected without radiance; poured from the moon, high above our heads in a sky tinted through all shades and modulations of blue, from turquoise on the horizon to opaque sapphire at the zenith—*dolce color*. —(It is difficult to use the work *colour* for this scene, without suggesting an exaggeration. The blue is almost indefinable, yet felt. But if possible, the total effect of the night landscape should be rendered by careful exclusion of tints from the word-palette. The art of the etcher is more needed than that of the painter.)—Heaven overhead is set with stars, shooting intensely, smouldering with dull red in Aldeboran, sparkling diamond-like in Sirius, changing from orange to crimson and green in the swart fire of yonder double star. On the snow this moonlight falls tenderly, not in hard white light and strong black shadow, but in tones of cream and ivory, rounding the curves of drift. The mountain peaks alone glisten as though they were built of silver, burnished by an agate. Far away they rise diminished in stature by the all-pervading dimness of bright light, that erases the distinctions of daytime. On the path before our feet lie crystals of many hues, the splinters of a thousand gems. In the wood there are caverns of darkness, alternating with spaces of star-twinkled sky, or windows opened between russet stems and solid branches for the moony sheen. The green of the pines is felt, although invisible, so soft in substance that it seems less like velvet than some materialised depth of dark green shadow.

II.

Snow falling noiseless and unseen. One only knows that it is falling by the blinking of our eyes, as the flakes settle on their lids and melt. The cottage windows shine red; and moving lanterns of belated wayfarers define the void around them. Yet the night is far from dark. The forests and the mountain bulk beyond the valley loom softly large and just distinguishable through a pearly haze. The path is purest trackless whiteness, almost dazzling though it has no light. This was what Dante felt when he reached the lunar sphere:

Parava a me, che nube ne coprisse
Lucida, spessa, solida e pulita.

Walking silent, with insensible footfall, slowly, for the snow is deep above our ankles, we wonder what the world would be like if this were all. Could the human race be acclimatised to this monotony, we say, perhaps emotion would be rarer, yet more poignant, suspended brooding on itself, and wakening by flashes to a quintessential mood. Then fancy changes, and the thought occurs that even so must be a planet, not yet wholly made, nor called to take her place among the sisterhood of light and song.

III.

Sunset was fading out upon the Rhaetikon and still reflected from the Seehorn on the lake, when we entered the gorge of the Fluela—dense pines on either hand, a mounting drift of snow in front, and faint peaks, paling from rose to saffron, far above, beyond. There was no sound but a tinkling stream and the continual jingle of our sledge-bells. We drove at a foot's pace, our horse finding his own path. When we left the forest, the light had all gone except for some almost imperceptible touches of primrose on the eastern horns. It was a moonless night, but the sky was alive with stars, and now and then one fell. The last house in the valley was soon passed, and we entered those bleak gorges where the wind, fine, noiseless, penetrating like an edge of steel, poured slantwise on us from the north. As we rose, the stars to west seemed far beneath us, and the Great Bear sprawled upon the ridges of the lower hills outspread. We kept slowly moving onward, upward, into what seemed like a thin impalpable mist, but was immeasurable tracts of snow. The last cembras were left behind, immoveable upon dark granite boulders on our right. We entered a formless and unbillowed sea of greyness, from which there rose dim mountain flanks that lost themselves in air. Up, ever up, and still below us westward sank the stars. We were now 7,500 feet above sea-level, and the December night was rigid with intensity of frost. The cold, and movement, and solemnity of space drowsed every sense.

IV.

The memory of things seen and done in moonlight is like the memory of dreams. It is as a dream that I recall the night of our tobogganing to Klosters—though it was full enough of active energy. The moon was in her second quarter, slightly filmed with very high thin clouds, that disappeared as night advanced, leaving the sky and stars in all their lustre. A sharp frost, sinking to three degrees above zero Fahrenheit, with a fine pure wind, such wind as here they call "the mountain breath." We drove to Wolfgang in a two-horse sledge, four of us inside, and our two Christians on the box. Up there, where the Alps of Death descend to join the Lakehorn Alps, above the Wolfswalk, there is a world of whiteness—frozen ridges, engraved like cameos of aerial onyx upon the dark, star-tremulous sky; sculptured buttresses of snow, en-

closing hollows filled with diaphanous shadow, and sweeping aloft into the upland fields of pure clear drift. Then came the swift descent, the plunge into the pines, moon-silvered on their frosted tops. The battalions of spruce that climb those hills, defined the dazzling snow from which they sprang like the black tufts upon an ermine robe. At the proper moment we left our sledge, and the big Christian took his reins in hand to follow us. Furs and great-coats were abandoned. Each stood forth tightly accoutred, with short coat, and clinging cap, and gaitered legs for the toboggin. Off we started in line, with but brief interval between, at first slowly, then glidingly, and when the impetus was gained, with darting, bounding, almost savage swiftness—sweeping round corners, cutting the hard snow-path with keen runners, avoiding the deep ruts, trusting to chance, taking advantage of smooth places, till the rush and swing and downward swoop became mechanical. Space was devoured. Into the massy shadows of the forest, where the pines joined overhead, we pierced without a sound, and felt far more than saw the great rocks with their icicles; and out again, emerging into moonlight, met the valley spread beneath our feet, the mighty peaks of the Silvretta and the vast blue sky. On, on, hurrying, delaying not, the woods and hills rushed by. Crystals upon the snow-banks glittered to the stars. Our souls would fain have stayed to drink these marvels of the moon-world; but our limbs refused. The magic of movement was upon us, and eight minutes swallowed the varying impressions of two musical miles. The village lights drew near and nearer; then the sombre village huts; and soon the speed grew less, and soon we glided to our rest into the sleeping village street.

V.

It was just past midnight. The moon had fallen to the western horns. Orion's belt lay bar-like on the opening of the pass, and Sirius shot flame on the Seehorn. A more crystalline night, more full of fulgent stars, was never seen, stars everywhere, but mostly scattered in large sparkles on the snow. Big Christian went in front, tugging toboggins by their strings, as Gulliver, in some old wood-cut, drew the fleets of Lilliput. Through the brown wood-châlets of Selfranger, up to the undulating meadows, where the snow slept pure and crisp, he led us. There we sat awhile and drank the clear air, cooled to zero, but innocent and mild as mother nature's milk. Then in an instant, down, down through the hamlet, with its châlets, stables, pumps, and logs, the slumbrous hamlet, where one dog barked, and darkness dwelt upon the path of ice, down with the tempest of a dreadful speed, that shot each rider upward in the air, and made the frame of the toboggin tremble—down over hillocks of hard frozen snow, dashing and bounding, to the river and the bridge. No bones were broken, though the race was thrice renewed, and men were spilt upon the roadside by some furious plunge. This amusement has the charm of peril and the unforeseen. In no wise else can colder, keener air be drunken at such furious speed.

The joy, too, of the engine-driver and the steeple-chaser is upon us. Alas, that it should be so short! If only roads were better made, there would be no end to it; for the toboggin cannot lose his wind. But the good thing fails at last, and from the silence of the moon we pass into the silence of the fields of sleep.

VI.

The new stable is a huge wooden building, with raftered lofts to stow the hay, and stalls for many cows and horses. It stands snugly in an angle of the pine-wood, bordering upon the great horse-meadow. Here at night the air is warm and tepid with the breath of kine. Returning from my forest walk, I spy one window yellow in the moonlight with a lamp. I lift the latch. The hound knows me, and does not bark. I enter the stable, where six horses are munching their last meal. Upon the corn-bin sits a knecht. We light our pipes and talk. He tells me of the valley of Arosa (a hawk's flight westward over yonder hills), how deep in grass its summer lawns, how crystal-clear its stream, how blue its little lakes, how pure, without a taint of mist, "too beautiful to paint," its sky in winter! This knecht is an *Ardüser*, and the valley of Arosa lifts itself to heaven above his *Langwies* home. It is his duty now to harness a sleigh for some night-work. We shake hands and part—I to sleep, he for the snow.

VII.

The lake has frozen late this year, and there are places in it where the ice is not yet firm. Little snow has fallen since it froze—about three inches at the deepest, driven by winds and wrinkled like the ribbed sea-sand. Here and there the ice-floor is quite black and clear, reflecting stars, and dark as heaven's own depths. Elsewhere it is of a suspicious whiteness, blurred in surface, with jagged cracks and chasms, treacherously mended by the hand of frost. Moving slowly, the snow cries beneath our feet, and the big crystals tinkle. These are shaped like fern-fronds, growing fan-wise from a point, and set at various angles, so that the moonlight takes them with capricious touch. They flash, and are quenched, and flash again, light darting to light along the level surface, while the sailing planets and the stars look down complacent at this mimicry of heaven. Everything above, around, beneath, is very beautiful—the slumbrous woods, the snowy fells, and the far distance painted in faint blue upon the tender background of the sky. Everything is placid and beautiful; and yet the place is terrible. For, as we walk, the lake groans, with throttled sobs, and sudden cracklings of its joints, and sighs that shiver, undulating from afar, and pass beneath our feet, and die away in distance when they reach the shore. And now and then an upper-crust of ice gives way; and will the gulfs then drag us down? We are in the very centre of the lake. There is no use in thinking or in taking heed. Enjoy the moment, then, and

march. Enjoy the contrast between this circumambient serenity and sweetness, and the dreadful sense of insecurity beneath. Is not, indeed, our whole life of this nature? A passage over perilous deeps, roofed by infinity and sempiternal things, surrounded too with evanescent forms, that like these crystals, trodden underfoot, or melted by the Föhn-wind into dew, flash, in some lucky moment, with a light that mimics stars! But to allegorise and sermonise is out of place here. It is but the expedient of those who cannot etch sensation by the burin of their art of words.

VIII.

It is ten o'clock upon Sylvester Abend, or New Year's Eve. Herr Buol sits with his wife at the head of his long table. His family and serving folk are round him. There is his mother, with little Ursula, his child, upon her knee. The old lady is the mother of four comely daughters and nine stalwart sons, the eldest of whom is now a grizzled man. Besides our host, four of the brothers are here to-night; the handsome melancholy Georg, who is so gentle in his speech; Simeon, with his diplomatic face; Florian, the student of medicine; and my friend, colossal-breasted Christian. Palmy came a little later, worried with many cares, but happy to his heart's core. No optimist was ever more convinced of his philosophy than Palmy. After them, below the salt, were ranged the knechts and porters, the marmiton from the kitchen, and innumerable maids. The board was tessellated with plates of birnen-brod and eier-brod, küchli and cheese and butter; and Georg stirred grampampuli in a mighty metal bowl. For the uninitiated, it may be needful to explain these Davos delicacies. Birnen-brod is what the Scotch would call a "bun," or massive cake composed of sliced pears, almonds, spices, and a little flour. Eier-brod is a saffron-coloured sweet bread, made with eggs; and küchli is a kind of pastry, crisp and flimsy, fashioned into various devices of cross, star, and scroll. Gram-pampuli is simply brandy burnt with sugar, the most unsophisticated punch I ever drank from tumblers. The frugal people of Davos, who live on bread and cheese and dried meat all the year, indulge themselves but once with these unwonted dainties in the winter.

The occasion was cheerful, and yet a little solemn. The scene was feudal. For these Buols are the scions of a warrior race:

A race illustrious for heroic deeds;
Humbled, but not degraded.

During the six centuries through which they have lived nobles in Davos, they have sent forth scores of fighting men to foreign lands, ambassadors to France, and Venice, and the Milanese, governors to Chiavenna and Bregaglia and the much-contested Valtelline. Members of their house are Counts of Buol-Schauenstein in Austria, Freiherrn of Mühlingen and Berenberg in the now German Empire. They keep the

patent of nobility conferred on them by Henri IV. Their ancient coat—parted per pale azure and argent, with a dame of the fourteenth century bearing in her hand a rose, all counterchanged—is carved in wood and monumental marble on the churches and old houses hereabouts. And from immemorial antiquity the Buol of Davos has sat thus on Sylvester Abend with family and folk around him, summoned from Alp and snowy field to drink grampampuli and break the birnen-brod.

These rites performed, the men and maids began to sing—brown arms lounging on the table, and red hands folded in white aprons—serious at first in hymn-like cadences, then breaking into wilder measures with a jodel at the close. There is a measured solemnity in the performance, which strikes the stranger as somewhat comic. But the singing was good; the voices strong and clear in tone, no hesitation and no shirking of the melody. It was clear that the singers enjoyed the music for its own sake, with half-shut eyes, as they take dancing, solidly, with deep-drawn breath, sustained and indefatigable. But eleven struck; and the two Christians, my old friend, and Palmy, said we should be late for church. They had promised to take me with them to see bell-ringing in the tower. All the young men of the village meet, and draw lots in the Stube of the Rathhaus. One party tolls the old year out; the other rings the new year in. He who comes last, is sconced three litres of Veltliner for the company. This jovial fine was ours to pay to-night.

When we came into the air, we found a bitter frost; the whole sky clouded over; a north wind whirling snow from alp and forest through the murky gloom. The benches and broad walnut tables of the Rathhaus were crowded with men, in shaggy homespun of brown and grey frieze. Its low wooden roof and walls enclosed an atmosphere of smoke, denser than the external snow-drift. But our welcome was hearty, and we found a score of friends. Titanic Fopp, whose limbs are Michelangellesque in length; spectacled Morosani; the little tailor Kramer, with a French horn on his knees; the puckered forehead of the Baumeister; the Troll-shaped postman; peasants and woodmen, known on far excursions upon pass and upland valley. Not one but carried on his face the memory of winter strife with avalanche and snowdrift, of horses struggling through Fluela whirlwinds, and wine-casks tugged across Bernina, and haystacks guided down precipitous gullies at thundering speed twixt pine and pine, and larches felled in distant glens beside the frozen water-courses. Here we were, all met together for one hour from our several homes and occupations, to welcome in the year with clinked glasses and cries of *Prosit Neujahr!*

The tolling bells above us stopped. Our turn had come. Out into the snowy air we tumbled, beneath the row of wolves' heads that adorn the pent-house roof. A few steps brought us to the still God's acre, where the snow lay deep and cold upon high-mounded graves of many generations. We crossed it silently, bent our heads to the low Gothic arch,

and stood within the tower. It was thick darkness there. But far above, the bells began again to clash and jangle confusedly, with volleys of dæmonic joy. Successive flights of ladders, each ending in a giddy platform hung across the gloom, climb to the height of some hundred and fifty feet; and all their rungs were crusted with frozen snow, deposited by trampling boots. For up and down these stairs, ascending and descending, moved other than angels—the frieze-jacketed Burschen, Grisons bears, rejoicing in their exercise, exhilarated with the tingling noise of beaten metal. We reached the first room safely, guided by firm-footed Christian, whose one candle just defined the rough walls and the slippery steps. There we found a band of boys, pulling ropes that set the bells in motion. But our destination was not reached. One more aerial ladder, perpendicular in darkness, brought us swiftly to the home of sound. It is a small square chamber, where the bells are hung, filled with the interlacement of enormous beams, and pierced to north and south by open windows, from whose parapets I saw the village and the valley spread beneath. The fierce wind hurried through it, charged with snow, and its narrow space was thronged with men. Men on the platform, men on the window-sills, men grappling the bells with iron arms, men brushing by to reach the stairs, crossing, recrossing, shouldering their mates, drinking red wine from gigantic beakers, exploding crackers, firing squibs, shouting and yelling in corybantic chorus. They yelled and shouted, one could see it by their open mouths and glittering eyes; but not a sound from human lungs could reach our ears. The overwhelming incessant thunder of the bells drowned all. It thrilled the tympanum, ran through the marrow of the spine, vibrated in the inmost entrails. Yet the brain was only steadied and excited by this sea of brazen noise. After a few moments I knew the place and felt at home in it. Then I enjoyed a spectacle which sculptors might have envied. For they ring the bells in Davos after this fashion :—The lads below keep them going with ropes. The men above climb in pairs on ladders to the beams from which they are suspended. Each comrade plants one leg upon the ladder, and sets the other knee firmly athwart the horizontal pine. Then round each other's waist they twine left arm and right. The two have thus become one man. Right arm and left are free to grasp the bell's horns, sprouting at its crest beneath the beam. With a grave rhythmic motion, bending sideward in a close embrace, swaying and returning to their centre from the well-knit loins, they drive the force of each strong muscle into the vexed bell. The impact is earnest at first; but soon it becomes frantic. The men take something from each other of exalted and enthusiastic. This efflux of their combined energies inspires them and exasperates the mighty resonance of metal which they rule. They are lost in a trance of what approximates to dervish passion—so thrilling is the surge of sound, so potent are the rhythms they obey. Men come and tug them by the heels. One grasps the starting thews

upon their calves. Another is impatient for their place. But they strain still, locked together, and forgetful of the world. At length they have enough : then slowly, clingly unclasp, turn round with gazing eyes, and are resumed, sedately, into the diurnal round of common life. Another pair is in their room upon the beam.

The Englishman who saw these things, stood looking up, enveloped in his ulster with the grey cowl thrust upon his forehead, like a monk. One candle cast a grotesque shadow of him on the plastered wall. And when his chance came, though he was but a weakling, he too climbed and for some moments grappled to the beam, and felt the madness of the swinging bell. Descending, he wondered long and strangely whether he ascribed too much of feeling to the men he watched. But no, that was impossible. There are emotions deeply seated in the joy of exercise, when the body is brought into play, and masses move in concert, of which the subject is but half conscious. Music and dance, and the delirium of battle or the chase, act thus upon spontaneous natures. The mystery of rhythm and associated energy and blood tingling in sympathy is here. It lies at the root of man's most tyrannous instinctive impulses.

It was past one when we reached home, and now a meditative man might well have gone to bed. But no one thinks of sleeping on Sylvester Abend. So there followed bowls of punch in one friend's room, where English, French, and Germans blent together in convivial Babel ; and flasks of old Montagner in another. Palmy, at this period, wore an archdeacon's hat, and smoked a churchwarden's pipe ; and neither were his own, nor did he derive anything ecclesiastical or Anglican from the association. Late in the morning we must sally forth, they said, and roam the town. For it is the custom here on New Year's night to greet acquaintances, and ask for hospitality, and no one may deny these self-invited guests. We turned out again into the grey snow-swept gloom, a curious *Comus*—not at all like Greeks, for we had neither torches in our hands nor rose-wreaths to suspend upon a lady's door-posts. And yet I could not refrain, at this supreme moment of jollity, in the zero temperature, amid my Grisons friends, from humming to myself verses from the Greek Anthology :—

The die is cast ! Nay, light the torch !

I'll take the road ! Up, courage, ho !

Why linger pondering in the porch ?

Upon Love's revel we will go !

Shake off those fumes of wine ! Hang care

And caution ! What has Love to do

With prudence ? Let the torches flare !

Quick, drown the doubts that hampered you !

Cast weary wisdom to the wind !

One thing, but one alone, I know :

Love bent e'en Jove and made him blind !

Upon Love's revel we will go !

And then again :—

I've drunk sheer madness! Not with wine,
 But old fantastic tales, I'll arm
 My heart in heedlessness divine,
 And dare the road nor dream of harm!
 I'll join Love's rout! Let thunder break,
 Let lightning blast me by the way!
 Invulnerable Love shall shake
 His ægis o'er my head to-day.

This last epigram was not inappropriate to an invalid about to begin the fifth act in a roystering night's adventure. And still once more :—

Cold blows the winter wind ; it's Love,
 Whose sweet eyes swim with honeyed tears,
 That bears me to thy doors, my love,
 Tossed by the storm of hopes and fears.
 Cold blows the blast of aching Love ;
 But be thou for my wandering sail,
 Adrift upon these waves of love,
 Safe harbour from the whistling gale !

However, upon this occasion, though we had winter-wind enough and cold enough, there was not much love in the business. My arm was firmly clenched in Christian Buol's, and Christian Palmy came behind, trolling out songs in Italian dialect, with still recurring *canaille* choruses, of which the facile rhymes seemed mostly made on a prolonged *amu-u-u-r*. It is noticeable that Italian ditties are specially designed for fellows shouting in the streets at night. They seem in keeping there, and nowhere else that I could ever see. And these Davosers took to them naturally when the time for Comus came. It was between four and five in the morning, and nearly all the houses in the place were dark. The tall church-tower and spire loomed up above us in grey twilight. The tireless wind still swept thin snow from fell and forest. But the frenzied bells had sunk into their twelvemonth's slumber, which shall be broken only by decorous tollings at less festive times. I wondered whether they were tingling still with the heart-throbs and the pressure of those many arms. Was their old age warmed, as mine was, with that gust of life—the young men who had clung to them like bees to lily bells, and shaken all their locked-up tone and shrillness into the wild winter air? Alas! how many generations of the young have handled them; and they are still there, frozen in their belfry; and the young grow middle-aged, and old, and die at last; and the bells they grappled in their lust of manhood toll them to their graves, on which the tireless wind will, winter after winter, sprinkle snow from alps and forests which they knew.

"There is a light," cried Christian, "up in Anna's window!" "A light! a light!" the Comus shouted. But how to get at the window which is pretty high above the ground, and out of reach of the most ardent revellers? We search a neighbouring shed, extract a stable-

ladder, and in two seconds Palmy has climbed to topmost rung, while Christian and Georg hold it firm upon the snow beneath. Then begins a passage from some comic opera of Mozart's or Cimarosa's—an escapade familiar to Spanish or Italian students, which recalls the stage. It is an episode from *Don Giovanni*, translated to this dark-etched scene of snowy hills, and Gothic tower, and mullioned windows deep embayed beneath their eaves and icicles. *Deh vieni alla finestra!* sings Palmy-Leporello; the chorus answers: *Deh vieni! Perchè non vieni ancora?* pleads Leporello; the chorus shouts: *Perchè? Mio amu-u-u-r*, sighs Leporello; and Echo cries, *amu-u-u-r!* All the wooing, be it noticed, is conducted in Italian. But the actors murmur to each other in Davoser Deutsch, "She won't come, Palmy! It is far too late, she is gone to bed. Come down; you'll wake the village with your caterwauling!" But Leporello waves his broad archdeacon's hat, and resumes a flood of flexible Bregaglian. He has a shrewd suspicion that the girl is peeping from behind the window curtain; and tells us, bending down from the ladder, in a hoarse stage-whisper, that we must have patience; "these girls are kittle cattle, who take long to draw; but if your lungs last out, they're sure to show." And Leporello is right. Faint heart ne'er won fair lady. From the summit of his ladder, by his eloquent Italian tongue, he brings the shy bird down at last. We hear the unbarring of the house door, and a comely maiden, in her Sunday dress, welcomes us politely to her ground-floor sitting-room. The Comus enters, in grave order, with set speeches, handshakes, and inevitable *Prosits!* It is a large low chamber, with a huge stone stove, wide benches fixed along the walls, and a great oval table. We sit how and where we can. Red wine is produced, and eier-brod and kühkli. Fräulein Anna serves us sedately, holding her own with decent self-respect against the inrush of the revellers. She is quite alone; but are not her father and mother in bed above, and within earshot? Besides, the Comus, even at this abnormal hour and after an abnormal night, is well conducted. Things seem slipping into a decorous wine-party, when Leporello readjusts the broad-brimmed hat upon his head, and very cleverly acts a little love scene for our benefit. Fräulein Anna takes this as a delicate compliment, and the thing is so prettily done in truth that not the sternest taste could be offended. Meanwhile another party of night wanderers, attracted by our mirth, break in. More *Prosits* and clinked glasses follow; and with a fair good-morning to our hostess, we retire.

It is too late to think of bed. "The quincunx of heaven," as Sir Thomas Browne phrased it on a dissimilar occasion, "runs low. . . . The huntsmen are up in America;" and not in America only, for the huntsmen, if there are any this night in Graubünden, have long been out upon the snow, and the stable-lads are dragging the sledges from their sheds to carry down the mails to Landquart. We meet the porters from the various hotels, bringing letter-bags and luggage to the post. It is time to turn in and take a cup of black coffee against the rising sun.

IX.

Some nights, even in Davos, are spent, even by an invalid, in bed. A leaflet, therefore, of "Sleep-chasings" may not inappropriately be flung, as envoy to so many wanderers on foot and sledge upon the winter snows.

The first is a confused medley of things familiar and things strange. I have been dreaming of far away old German towns, with gabled houses deep in snow; dreaming of chalets in forgotten Alpine glens, where wood-cutters come plunging into sleepy light from gloom, and sinking down beside the stove to shake the drift from their rough shoulders; dreaming of vast veils of icicles upon the gaunt black rocks in places where no foot of man will pass, and where the snow is weaving eyebrows over the ledges of grey whirlwind-beaten precipices; dreaming of Venice, forlorn beneath the windy drip of rain, the gas lamps flickering on the swimming piazzetta, the barche idle, the gondolier wrapped in his thread-bare cloak, alone; dreaming of Apennines, with world-old cities, brown, above the brown sea of dead chestnut boughs; dreaming of stormy tides, and watchers aloft in lighthouses when day is finished; dreaming of dead men and women and dead children, in the earth, far down beneath the snow-drifts, six feet deep. And then I lift my face, awaking, from my pillow; the pallid moon is on the valley, and the room is filled with spectral light.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. This is a hospice in an unfrequented pass, between sad peaks, beside a little black lake, overdrifted with soft snow. I pass into the house-room, gliding silently. An old man and an old woman are nodding, bowed in deepest slumber, by the stove. A young man plays the zither on a table. He lifts his head, still modulating with his fingers on the strings. He looks right through me with wide anxious eyes. He does not see me, but sees Italy, I know, and some one wandering on a sandy shore.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. This is St. Stephen's Church, in Wien. Inside, the lamps are burning dimly in the choir. There is fog in the aisles; but through the sleepy air and over the red candles flies a wild soprano's voice, a boy's soul in its singing sent to heaven.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. From the mufflers in which his father, the mountebank, has wrapped the child, to carry him across the heath, a little tumbling-boy emerges, in soiled tights. He is half asleep. His father scrapes the fiddle. The boy shortens his red belt, kisses his fingers to us, and ties himself into a knot among the glasses on the table.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. I am looking up into the snow-cloud, thick, grey, fleecy, drowning the church spire. An angel is beside me. I touch his hand. We fly aloft; and on the upper surface of the snow-cloud streams the liquid moon—a world of molten metal luminous beneath the boundless sky. Down there above the Tinzenhorn, waist high, emerging from the mountain range, the genius of Italy stands up and smiles to me. His forehead is wreathed with cyclamens.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. Vittorio has the face of an angel

—a Guercino angel—and a very tiny Modenese soul. He sat up all night in the watch-room, by the light of one candle ; and when the swallows twittered for the dawn, a sleepless traveller went down and stood by him, and watched him sleeping, very beautiful, his little curly head resting on his hands upon the table, and a great cloak lined with bear-skin huddled round his shoulders. The traveller touched his curls with his lips ; but Vittorio woke not. *O anima bella, disse, e dormigliosa !*

I sleep, and change my dreaming. I am on the parapet of a huge circular tower, hollow like a well, and pierced with windows at irregular intervals. The parapet is broad, and slabbed with red Verona marble. Around me are athletic men, all naked, in the strangest attitudes of studied rest, down-gazing, as I do, into the depth below. There comes a confused murmur of voices, and the tower is threaded and rethreaded with great cables. Up these there climb to us a crowd of young men, naked, clinging to the ropes and flinging their bodies sideways on aerial trapezes. My heart trembles with keen joy and terror. For nowhere else could plastic forms be seen more beautiful, and nowhere else is peril more apparent. Leaning my chin upon the utmost verge, I wait. I watch one youth, who smiles, and soars to me ; and when his face is almost touching mine, he speaks, but what he says I know not.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. The whole world rocks to its foundations. The mountain summits that I know, are shaken. They bow their bristling crests. They are falling, falling on us, and the earth is riven. I wake in terror, shouting : *ET INSOLITIS TREMUERUNT MOTIBUS ALPES !* An earthquake, slight but real, has stirred the ever-wakeful Vesta of the brain to this Virgilian quotation.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. Once more at night I sledge alone upon the Klosters road. It is the point where the woods close over it and moonlight may not pierce the boughs. There come shrill cries of many voices from behind, and rushings that pass by and vanish. Then on their sledges I behold the phantoms of the dead who died in Davos, longing for their homes ; and each flies past me, shrieking in the still cold air ; and phosphorescent like long meteors, the pageant turns the windings of the road below and disappears.

I sleep, and change my dreaming. This is the top of some high mountain, where the crags are cruelly tortured and cast in enormous splinters on the ledges of cliffs grey with old-world ice. A ravine, opening at my feet, plunges down immeasurably to a dim and distant sea. Above me soars a precipice embossed with a gigantic ice-bound shape. As I gaze thereon, I find the lineaments and limbs of a Titanic man chained and nailed to the rock. His beard has grown for centuries, and flowed this way and that, adown his breast and over to the stone on either side ; and the whole of him is covered with a greenish ice, ancient beyond the memory of man. "This is Prometheus," I whisper to myself, "and I am alone on Caucasus."

A Poaching Adventure.

MANY years have passed since our terrible affray with the celebrated "Black Gang," but the memory of it still lingers in the neighbourhood; and in the lone farmhouse with its picturesque gables, and the more modern "public," where the swinging sign emblazoned with the "Colliers' Arms" promises good accommodation for man and beast, no better story can be told round the blazing fire than that of our encounter.

But who were the "Black Gang," and what had I to do with them? Let us begin at the beginning.

My father, James Fraser, was gardener at Hawkswood Hall, in Lancashire. He had come when quite a lad, as I understand, from Inverkeith, in Ross-shire, where the young squire ("the Captain," as we always called him, though he was then only a boy at Eton) had picked him up on a shooting expedition. Fraser showed soon such an aptitude for gardening that, from being a mere casual assistant of old Hitchcox, he became ere long his coadjutor, and in a few years succeeded, at the old man's death, to the rose-trellised white stuccoed cottage at the further end of the kitchen garden near the great horsepond. Here he united his fortunes to those of Mary Pilling, the under still-room maid, and here I, their eldest son, was born. How long ago, I need not tell you—suffice it to say that at the time of the adventure I was a strong, well-grown lad of about eighteen.

But who were the "Black Gang?" you ask. The "Black Gang" were a body of poachers, who had long been the terror of the neighbourhood, and, at the same time, its mystery. No gentleman's cover for miles round was safe from their attacks. Frequently changing the locality of their ravages, and having, it was suspected, some easy means of disposing of their booty in the large towns, they had succeeded for several years in eluding detection. Other poachers there were in our parts; but these were mere bunglers, and, as bunglers, were naturally found out and brought to justice. If Dick Broadbent, as he crossed Ferny Brow to his work at the stone quarry, happened to knock over an old jack hare by a well-directed cast of his knobbed cudgel; if those idle fellows, Tom Clegg and Seth Taylor, were seen with their huge fustian jackets somewhat more distended in the region of the pockets than the policeman thought necessary for the accommodation of their red pocket-handkerchief, or even a moderate allowance of "baggin'" in the shape of bread and cheese, who so sure to be brought before the "Justices," and to meet with condign punishment at our Petty Sessions? But what were an occasional hare, rabbit, or pheasant to compare with the whole-

sale raids of "the Gang"! *They* were never meddled with by policemen, who, indeed, had no clue to their identity. Keepers and watchers, it was shrewdly suspected, were more anxious to avoid coming across their path, than to challenge their business. Ever since that poor Sussex fellow, whom Squire Thornicroft had engaged as head-keeper, was found lying among the frost-covered brambles in the ditch outside Dingley Copse three years before, on that cold November morning, it seemed to have been well understood that, where the Gang were concerned, discretion was better than valour, and that a few pheasants more or less was, after all, a paltry question, as compared with such an issue. True, Brandram had not been able to utter the dreaded name; but, by the signs he made before he died, it was plain enough who had been his aggressors.

"Why, what a cowardly lot you were in those parts!" cries many a youthful reader of these pages.

Well, I was myself, as you know, not a thorough-bred Lancashire man, and I knew very well that fear was not the only factor in the problem. Indeed, for all ordinary matters of life, you would have thought fear had been left out of the composition of many of the men with whom I had to do. When "the Captain" first became possessed of Vampire, and the morning after his arrival he nearly kicked the second groom to death, I know there was a keen competition among the stable hands as to who should have the honour of taming him; and, after all, it was the injured man who in the end obtained the only complete mastery over him, and always seemed to like him the better for that limp in his left leg which gave to himself ever afterwards the nickname of Jim Hobbles. Ah! he was a horse, was Vampire, and he did his work regularly till he was five-and-twenty years old, and up to the last he had to wear a ten-pound shot strapped to each of his hind fetlocks in the stall. Then again, when that fearful colliery explosion took place at Blackpits, and the manager offered ten pounds to any one who would volunteer to go down in the cradle to see who was left alive, did not more men offer at once than he knew what to do with, and every one of those he picked out refused the money for himself, and gave it to the common fund for the widows and children of the poor fellows who were killed?

"No! there was another reason why the Gang was not detected, and every one round Hawkswood knew it well. In spite of what the "Parliament folks" might rule "up i' Lunnnon," no one in our country ever could believe that wild beasts, which had no owner, could belong to anybody but the captor. "Look 'ee 'ere!" was the convincing argument of old Royster the rat-catcher, who was always suspected of using his ferrets for other game, on his own account—"Look 'ee 'ere! those hens be hens an those geese be geese, beant they? an iv they be a scrattin' in th' garden or a pickin on th' common, they be Tom o' Dick's, wherever they be. He bred 'em an he knows 'em. But iv Squire Thornicroft's hare runs across Ferny Brow into our Squire's copse, dunno

yo tell me as he changes his maister each toime as 'e whisks backard an forrard. Squoire woulde know 'im iv 'e seed 'im. No! nor iv 'e seed 'im 'angin up by 's 'eels o' th' poulterer's hooks, noather. An when he runs o'er that bit o' common land as belongs to nobody, is he nobody's hare, a wonder? Dunno yo tell me about Parlyment. They's soft-headed chaps ith' Parlyment, a reckon, an it's like they should be, so far i' th' south as they liven. A dar say there's some on 'em as does na know a founmart from a weasel."

Few of the regular frequenters of "Tom o' Dick's" ever dared to meet old Royster in argument on this subject, supported, as he was sure to be, by a ready chorus of "That's it, oud lad! Thou 'rt the felly to tackle th' justices. Thou shouldst be a Parlyment mon, thyself!" But if any stranger among the company round the fire at the "Jolly Postboy" was rash enough to profess himself unconvinced about the ownership of *feræ naturæ*, the rat-catcher had a further argument which was always known to end the debate.

"Does thou know ma ferret Nipper?" he would say, with a sudden *argumentum ad hominem*. "Nay, an he doesn't know thee, a reckon. But iv thou thinks it's all th' same whether thou knows thy beast or not when thou sees it, an he knows thee, just put thy hond i' my coat-pocket here, an thou'll see what he 'll make on't."

In fact, there was no use disguising it. Saxon or Danish, whatever was the origin of the rough stalwart peasantry in our country, the time had never yet been when they had admitted the feudal rights of their lords as regarded game, or ceased to look upon it in the same light as Robin Hood and his merry men "the king's deer" in Sherwood glades of old.

You see now how it came to pass that in those days before the invention of rural and town police, when the country parishes were guarded by their own "constable," and the towns by a few incapable "Charleys," who patrolled the streets in long coats with capes, bawling out the hours of night—with the sympathies of all except the upper classes on the side of the poacher—a pretty good business could be carried on by a well-organised gang, constantly replenished, if any little accident befell an individual, by younger men with a strong innate love of sport and adventure.

But a crisis was approaching in the hitherto successful career of the Black Gang. The fate of poor Brandram, though every one believed that he was killed by misadventure, had stirred up the slumbering energies of magistrates and squires. Something must be done. That was why old Jeremiah Smith (generally called "Old Jerry" or "Jerry Keeper," for he had been a keeper on our estate since the memory of man, and no one could recall the time when he was not attired in dark-green fustian, with brass buttons and knee breeches to match, with or without leggings)—old Jeremiah, I say, had been closeted for so long a time with "the Captain" in the "Justicing Room" at the Hall. That was why he was

so mysteriously dumb when questioned in the servants' hall and cross-questioned at the stables as to the purport of the interview. The butler elicited nothing more than a retort courteous, the under-keepers and stablemen a retort without the courtesy, the women (even my lady's maid, who was always a favourite with the old man) could get nothing out of him, I grieve to say, but a wink with his left eye (the right had been injured by a shot which lodged in it years ago, one twelfth of August). Yet everybody was conscious that some great event was impending. And so it proved to be.

The first person to be admitted into the secret was, I believe, my father. It was on the Thursday morning, as I remember well, for that was our market day, that my mother had started early to the neighbouring town behind the old white pony. I had just finished some work at the hedges round the kitchen garden, and was coming up to the cottage with my bill-hook in my hand, when who should come out but Jerry Keeper and my father, and I heard the latter say (he never lost his Scotch accent): "Weel, Jerry, an he's a strong eneuch laddie, an a brave one, an he wad na like to be left behind, I ken. But ye'll have a care on him!" I was conscious, too, that old Jerry eyed me with more than his usual interest, and seemed to be taking a mental inventory of my limbs and development, as I walked up whistling "The Blue-bells of Scotland." But whatever was the subject of his thoughts, I was not destined to know till the evening of the next day.

The next day! Friday it was, in the second week in December. How little did any of us realise what a great day it was to be in our lives! Even now, looking back on all that I can recollect in my sixty years, I do not know one which stands out with such clear, marked prominence. I seem to recall each detail with the minuteness of a photograph, with the life-like reality of a moving tableau.

I had been told that I was wanted at the Hall at seven o'clock in the evening, and that I was to go in my working clothes. On my way I encountered two or three of the outdoor labourers, who, as I found, had been summoned there likewise; none of us knew for what object, but we had some notion that it was connected with the poaching. There was, too, an impression in the neighbourhood that the Gang were somewhere about—where, either nobody knew or nobody cared to say. When we reached the Hall, we were shown into an old room, once the ancient kitchen of the house, but now seldom used, where we found assembled a party of not less than five-and-twenty men. All the grooms and stable helpers (except the boy who looked after the young ladies' ponies), the under-gardeners, the two keepers and old Jerry, two footmen, whom I hardly knew in the fustian coats which some one had lent them, several labourers from the nearest farms, and some others whom I did not recognise. A blazing fire had been lighted in the old chimney, and the logs were roaring famously up the flue; but, what seemed the most cheerful sight of all, a huge table was spread in the centre of the kitchen, on

which pewter plates and mugs, cold beef and mutton, cheese, and great jugs of ale were ranged in order, causing many a fellow's mouth to water at the prospect of a supper.

"Are we all here?" asked old Jerry, who appeared to be the master of the feast. "Then, let's begin."

It needed no further invitation. Five-and-twenty pairs of jaws were soon busily at work, and many a long pull was made as the tankard went round. At length there was a pause, and old Jerry, after hammering the oak table with the hilt of his knife, addressed the audience.

"Lads!" he said, "I've summat to tell ye. It's about them poachers. Th' Squire beant agoin' to stan' it ony longer. They're clean'd out Bingley Copse o' pheasants, as ther' isn't noan left; and what's th' use o' rearin' on 'em as we do, an' feedin' on 'em till they're old enough to shift for themselves, iv a parcel of villains is to sweep 'em off like that? I tell ye, when th' Captain went to shoot th' home covers wi' them furrin foak, an' had toud 'em they'd find foine spoort at Hawkswood, a long sight better. I reckon, nor they get i' their own country, what sort o' bag dun yo' think they made among 'em? One owd hare an' three rabbits! So he sends for me, and 'e says, says he, 'Jerry, I con stan' it no longer. I'm blest,' he says, 'if I can houd up my yed afore thoose French gentlemen. Now,' he says, 'you must do somethin, Jerry, to stop this poachin'. I leave it i' your hands.' That's what Cap'en said. An' this is th' outcome on't. We're boun' this very neet to catch these poachers!"

Here the old keeper paused, as if to invite remarks.

"How many on 'em dun yo' think ther' be?" asked Dick Holt of the mill.

"Art thou afeard on 'em?" said old Jerry contemptuously.

"I'm noan afeard," replied Dick. "But yo' talk o' catchin' on 'em, an' it takes two dogs to catch a hare sometimes, let alone a founmart."

"Why," said Jerry, "there beant moor nor ten on 'em, as I hear, an iv we can't tackle ten, we're but jackasses, to ma thinkin'!"

"Well, Jerry," asked one of the stablemen from the other end of the table, "but what if these fellows let fly at us? It's ill groomin' a colt till ye know which end of him y'ar handlin'!"

"Aye, aye!" echoed several voices together.

"Whew!" said the old keeper. "Who says they're such fools as to let fly? They know a deal better nor that. Poachers never let fly if they're reetly hondled. Yo' do as I tell yo', an' we'll have 'em all, as sure as my name's Jerry. Look ye here!"—and the old man hobbled up to the corner of the room and brought out his arms full of stout oak cudgels—"these are what we're to carry; an iv ony mon's afeard, let him stay awhom an' be tied to his grandmother's apron strings!"

There was no reply save a muttered exclamation or two, and each man proceeded to try how his weapon suited, several of the labourers moistening their palms to get a firmer grasp.

"Now," cried our leader, "are yo' all ready?"

"Aye, aye!" was the general reply.

"Then," said he, looking at his huge silver watch, which he tugged out of his fob, "we'll have one more pull at th' Hawkswood ale, and then be off."

The cook brought in a huge tankard of hot spiced ale, which was passed round from man to man, a bevy of kitchen-maids and others meanwhile peeping in, and giggling as they pushed one another forwards to get a better view of the scene.

At length the last man drained the tankard with a loving smack, and, passing the back of his horny hand across his mouth, seized his stick and shouted "Ready!"

We marched out into the night. Very dark it was—black as a wolf's throat, as the saying is. At first we could discern nothing. Even I, who knew all the shrubs and turns of the walks by heart, and who was therefore called to the front by Jerry, had to hold out both arms to feel my way through the box hedges and up to the wicket-gate that opened on the park. When we had all emerged from this we were able to make out objects a little more clearly. There was no moon; but a few stars shone here and there, and I could identify the tall elm which stands at the corner of the duck-pond, and in the hollow of which, when a boy, I had found the owl's nest. All was still, except for the sound of our feet crunching the frosted grass. Jerry had enjoined the strictest silence. Up the steep slope by the dairy ground, and then along the path towards Stow Wood—we marched like ghosts. When we reached the fox covers on the top of the hill, Jerry paused, and in a low voice bade the men close up. He would not speak till we all stood close round him, as close as we could pack; then, in a few brief words, he issued his instructions.

"They're comin'," he said, "to-night, as I'm toud, to try Redley Copse. As sure as sartain they'll be in it by nine o'clock, a knockin' th' pheasants off their perch, like mischievous varmint as they are. It mun be now welly ten, an' they're about in th' thick on't. We mun break i two, an' then we'st get round 'em. Jack Halliday—is Jack Halliday there?" he asked.

"Aye, Master Smith!" replied a voice close to my shoulder, which I recognised in the darkness as belonging to one of the stable men.

"Jack, thou knows oud Archer's gate, close by Bridge end?"

"Aye, to be sure!" said the voice, which, if a little thicker and gruffer than usual, showed, at all events, by its firm and steady tone, that it belonged to a man of some resolution.

"Well, lad, thou 'rt to take hauf o' th' men wi' thee, an' when thou gets to Archer's get o'er th' gate an' creep down by th' hedge side on thy reet hond, till thou gets to th' owd oak by th' rabbit warren. Then thou 'rt close by th' spinney as joins on to Redley Copse. Creep through th' gap wheer the little bruck comes out, and moind as ye mak no noise. They'll be somewher theereabouts, an' if we dunnot catch 'em o', an' bring 'em afore th' Justices, ma name's noan Jerry!"

"Nay, but, Jerry," asked another voice, which I thought was that of Primrose, one of the footmen, and in which either the cold night or some latent apprehension caused a little quaver to be heard, "if they wi' not come wi' us quietly, what are we to do?"

"Do?" cried the old keeper, with a stronger expletive than I care to record—"do? whoy, make 'em, to be sure! Thou lay fast houd o' th' first thou comes across, an' iv he awses to flear thee wi' his gun, hit him o'er th' hond wi' thy stick. But, lorjus deas, they han moor sense nor to feyght, let alooan we're two to one. They'll be moor loike to run, to ma thinkin'. An' iv they don'tak' to punsing, thou 'st noan got thy cannary breeches on, hast tha, to be freetend for a bit o' mud. But if thou an' Dick Holt their beest afeard——"

"We're noan afeared," said Dick, raising his voice, as a suppressed laugh made itself heard round about. "We're noan afeard! an' iv any one says as I fear owt, other mon or boggart, I'll——"

"Houd thy tongue, for a gawvison as thou art," exclaimed our leader, "is na ther enou' to do wi' feyghtin' th' gang, that thou must be after feyghtin foaks as is better than thysen? Thou 'rt like a year owd cock up ov a midden as 'ud liefer feyght his own feyther nor have nowt to peck at! But thou needs n't goo a warnin' th' poachers wi' thy noise, so as they may know wheerabout we are!"

"Thou needs n't be so lunjous, Jerry; a meant no harm," replied Dick, rather crestfallen.

"Has onybody else ought to say?" asked the old man disdainfully.

There was no answer this time, and he proceeded at once to divide his forces between himself and Halliday. This was done by the simple plan of making the men stand a little apart and counting heads—no very easy thing in the dark. At length it was completed, and Halliday and his party were ready to start. I was to go with Jerry, and the old man whispered to me to keep close by him.

Before they left us, however, our leader, after the fashion of great generals, gave a few last injunctions to Jack.

"Keep thy men close, Jack, an' as silent as moudewarps. If thou leets on 'em afore we don, mind, we shannot be far off, lay houd on 'em, an' if they're too many for ye, use your sticks on their yeds. We'll be up in a minute. Yo needn't fear makkin a mark or two on 'em, they're noan so pertikler i' that way."

No more was said. The men filed off silently, and in a few moments the indistinctly moving objects were no longer recognisable in the dark.

Our leader then addressed us in turn.

"Now, lads, yo heard what I said to Jack Halliday. We 'rn to do th' same. Houd yer tongues an' come after me as quiet as yo con."

We followed him in silence, my heart, I confess, beating a little—partly with the excitement which every sportsman knows when he is

putting his own quickness of perception and skill against that of the object of his chase, partly also with the undefinable dread which a young soldier feels the first time he comes under fire. But I resolved to stand my ground like a man, whatever should happen, and, after all, unless firearms should unfortunately be used, there need not be any danger to life.

Our course seemed to lead us at a right angle to that of the other party, and I thought at first that we were about to strike into the large wood whose dim outline I began to make out on the right. Before we reached it, however, Jerry left the path and led us down a steep hill, at the bottom of which trickled a small stream, whose course he followed, till, after half an hour's tramp, startling occasionally a meditative cow, whose warm breath surrounded her head like a halo, and now and then startled ourselves by the rush of some wild creature through the dry beech leaves in the dyke, we came to a halt at a point where the brook which we had followed found its way under some palings, and entered, as I well knew, the copse where we were to find the poachers. It was a plantation of considerable extent and contained a good deal of broken ground. We climbed cautiously one by one over a dilapidated part of the fence, the old man leading; and then, with the utmost precaution, followed him down one of the glades towards a long disused gravel pit whose sides were thickly covered in many places with gorse and broom. A deerstalker could hardly have made his approaches more carefully to the ridge where he expected to sight his game than did Jerry to the edge of the falling ground. The rest of us crouched low under the hazel bushes, lest by chance the figure of any one should be visible in outline to the enemy below; for we gathered from Jerry's gestures, rather than anything he said, that here he expected to find some of the Gang. The old keeper, as if familiar with every turn and fall of the ground, rapidly but noiselessly stole up to a thick growth of gorse which concealed a water-worn gully leading into the hollow, and, after listening intently for a few moments, peered through the prickly screen into the dark. He crept back to us and shook his head.

"I can see nowt, lad," he whispered to me. "They may be on t'other side o' th' copse by Throstle Cleugh. We mun start again."

Skirting the edge of the gravel pit, we followed Jerry cautiously up a steep and narrow track thickly overgrown with hazel and oak, pushing aside the branches with as little noise as possible, and pausing every now and then to listen and take breath. The silence was unbroken, save by the occasional call of a pheasant in the distance, or the scuffling of a rabbit through the copse. I thought, however, after we had crossed the little ridge, that I heard, once or twice, the cracking of dry twigs, as if some larger animal were moving not far from us. I whispered to Jerry to take notice of it, but he shook his head impatiently and led us forwards. We were just filing down an old cart track, bordered closely by thick undergrowth, when, with a start which brought my heart into my

mouth, as the saying is, I heard a sudden bang by my side, as of a heavy stick on a hat; I was conscious myself of a blow on the shoulder, as of a gun-barrel, and, in a moment, as our [assailants crashed through the underwood, we found ourselves fighting desperately with the enemy. The darkness was so great that it was impossible to make out the number of our assailants; besides, we were taken unawares, and, apparently, engaged in a life and death struggle, for it was evident, from their assuming the aggressive in this daring way, and from the ambush which they had laid for us, that the Gang intended to secure themselves by our destruction. "Dead men tell no tales," was the thought which flashed through my mind at that instant, joined with the remembrance of poor Brandram, as I had seen him on that fatal morning when we had carried him on a hurdle to the Hall to breathe his last. But my blood was up, and, as far as the darkness would allow, I dealt some telling blows right and left in the *mêlée*. Jerry had been struck down from behind by our dastardly assailants, but, true to his own instructions, without even uttering a groan to betray his pain, struggled up to his feet again, as I stood over him, and dealt such a blow on the head of the big fellow with whom I was now engaged, as sent him reeling into a thorn bush with a yell of agony. At the same moment I was myself felled to the ground, and, I suppose, lost consciousness for a few moments. When I came to myself I was still lying among the withered bracken into which I had fallen; but, instead of the fierce hand-to-hand conflict carried on in dogged silence, I heard a mingled and confused medley of cries and exclamations of familiar voices in the dark.

"Whoy, Jack, is that thee?" exclaimed some one in front of me, at the same time trying to raise up a prostrate body from the ground.

"Aye, it's me, sure enough, but I'se gotten my yed welly brokken i' two," was the answer. "But wheer be those poacher varmint as set on us? It was well yo come up at last. There's some on us no better nor black puddings, to ma thinkin'. But we'n fettled a few on 'em, I'se warrant ye."

"Here's one as I stopped poachin' for a while," said the well-known voice of old Jerry, as, like some Shakespearian combatant, he pulled out a fallen adversary by the leg from a hollow where he lay. But no sooner had he done so, and turned his man over on his back so as to make out his features, than the old man dropped upon one knee, and, slapping his thigh, exclaimed—

"By th' mon! it's oather Jack Halliday, or it's a boggart! Lads," he cried, "we'n been feyghtin' wi' our own chaps, or ahm no better nor a fussiker!"

It was too true! We had fallen in with our own party, and each division had carried out so faithfully their leader's instructions that it was a mercy none of us had been killed outright. Even as it was, three had been so much injured that it was with difficulty they could be half dragged, half supported, back to the Hall. Of these, one was of our

detachment, and two (including Halliday himself) of Jack's. A sorry sight it was when we returned home. In spite of the housekeeper's injunctions the women-servants had insisted on sitting up to witness our triumphant entrance with the captured poachers; and when the old butler, at the sound of our footsteps, flung open the door, and, amidst eager exclamations of "Where are they?" "How many of them?" "Lawks! there's some of 'em got wounded!" a flood of light fell upon scratched and mud-bespattered faces, torn coats, heads tied up in blood-smeared handkerchiefs, and all the signs of our ferocious struggle, I suppose most of the combatants felt, as I did, a strong desire that the next time that the "Black Gang" were to be captured, the adventure might fall to the lot of other heroes than ourselves.

Well! that memorable night was not altogether barren of results. Whether, as we liked to believe, terrified at our determined attempt to capture them, or for some other reason known to themselves, the "Black Gang" were not heard of again in our neighbourhood. Indeed, if you were to judge from the absolute silence concerning them which, from that day forward, was maintained among ourselves, their very existence at any time was become mythical. Yet a bald space on the top of my head—bald, not with age, though the hair is gray all round—testifies, in a way which I am not likely to forget, to the reality of a belief which was entertained about them, by myself as well as others, many many years ago.

The Census of 1881.

ONCE more the time draws near for the enumeration of the people. The decennial counting of population which has taken place in England from the beginning of the present century, is to be effected for the ninth time on April 4 next, and the *Householder's Schedule* representing the Government request for information will already be in the hands of many of our readers when the present number of this magazine reaches them.

The Act under which the impending inquiry will be made (43 & 44 Vict. c. 37) bears date September 7 last. That date itself is a sufficient reminder that the Statute must be expected to contain no striking novelties. It recalls a disturbed parliamentary session, the close of which was unwontedly deferred, and suggests a wearied Legislature far more likely to have passed a necessary Bill in a form already familiar, than to have imparted to it any new and peculiar features. As a matter of fact the *Act for taking the Census of England*, which became law last year, is, so far as its demand from the public is concerned, the precise counterpart of its predecessor dated August 10, 1870.

No one can say that the information which it requires the people to furnish is unreasonably redundant or oppressively complex. The *Householder's Schedule* which, as we have said, expresses the statutory demand, asks, in respect of each member of every household in England and Wales, the following few and simple facts :—

1. Name and surname. These are wanted not as ends but as means ; not as a basis of statistics concerning personal or family nomenclature, but by way of security in counting the several human units whom they distinguish.

2. A statement is demanded as to whether each person enumerated is head of a family, or, if not, in what relation he stands to that head. In census matters the occupier of a house or apartment, whether male or female, is deemed to be the head of a family, and the family consists of all who are the occupier's belongings or appendages ; these may be his or her relatives, servants, boarders, or visitors. The solitary lodger is at once head and family too, while two or more lodgers boarding together are also held to constitute a separate family. An outdoor servant, again, occupying a lodge or other tenement contiguous to a mansion, is treated as an independent personage for enumeration, or as the head of a family, if he have any ; unless, indeed, he board with his master's household, when he is reckoned as part of that household. Investigations with

respect to the relationships subsisting between the groups of people enumerated as families, were not begun until the sixth Census—that of 1851. The analysis of the composition of these families brings out many social facts of utility and interest.

3. The item of information next asked for is the condition as to marriage: whether it be that of celibacy, wedlock, or widowhood. When it is remembered that population is primarily regulated by matrimony, and when it is understood that the position of a people with regard to this institution is for many reasons a test of their present well-being and of their favourable prospects for the future, it is at once seen that the matter in question should form part of the census scrutiny. Like that last spoken of, it was first inquired into at the census of 1851, having previously been strangely omitted.

4. The sex now has to be stated. This specification is necessary, since names and other particulars would not always show to which sex an individual might belong. Much that is published in the census reports as to the ladies and gentlemen of the community would perhaps be generally voted dull. But startling indeed in their interest are some of the facts disclosed in those reports as to the sexes. For instance, it was shown in 1871 that there were in the United Kingdom 893,195 more women than men.

5. Age is the fact next required—that item of information sometimes so reluctantly breathed, and occasionally so foolishly misstated! Age, too, is peculiarly liable to be erroneously given through inadvertency or forgetfulness. Genuine uncertainty on this point is chiefly to be observed among the lower classes; but it ought to be a diminishing peculiarity of those ranks of society. Under the Elementary Education Acts, Factory and Workshops Acts, &c., proof of age is now required on so many occasions in the life of the working-man, that the date of his birth should be written on his memory with some distinctness. Beyond doubt, this part of the census inquiry is of great importance. If the true sanitary condition of a community is to be understood, it is essential that the ages of its members should be periodically learned, for the invaluable teaching of death-rates is necessarily missed if it be not received with a knowledge of the vital conditions under which those rates prevail. The first attempt to learn the ages of the people was made in 1821, when the third decennial enumeration took place, but not until 1841 was the inquiry effectually prosecuted.

6. The next particular called for is the rank, profession, or occupation. In order that a correct classification of the people according to their social orders and industrial pursuits may be secured, detailed instructions as to the way in which this information should be expressed are printed upon the schedules. It will be observed, for example, that a clergyman is there enjoined not to call himself *clerk*; that such descriptions as *gentleman* and *esquire* are deprecated; and that *engineer*, *labourer*, and other like terms, which may mean several different things,

are pointed out for avoidance. Many and various are the grounds on which the demand as to occupation may be justified. "The co-operative societies, the companies with limited liability, the question of the employment of women, the regulation of children's work, trades unions, the federation of employers, the continual developments and displacements of branches of trade in different localities, amidst an increasing population which derives food and the raw materials partly from home produce and partly from foreign countries at one time friendly at another time hostile—are all reasons for collecting full and exact information on a subject of such unquestionable importance."* Investigations into the occupations of the people have never been wanting in any English census.

7. A statement as to place of birth is next required. It must be full and explicit. If the birth took place in England, the county and town or parish must be mentioned; if in Scotland, Ireland, India, or the Colonies, the country or colony; if in foreign parts, the State. In the answers given under this head the foundations are laid for comprehensive statistics on the weighty and interesting topics of migration and immigration. Place of birth was not asked for in the census schedules until the enumeration of 1861.

8. The last column of the schedule will be wanted only in exceptional cases—in those, namely, of blindness or one of the other infirmities specified in the heading. None probably would be inclined to question the usefulness of general information as to the maladies here to be noted. Inquiries into such matters were made for the first time at the census of 1861.

This, then, is all for which the Government asks. Simple, indeed, are the questions; easy and ready should be the answers. But before the queries can be addressed to the whole of a large, busy, and locomotive population simultaneously, much forethought has to be exercised, and much detail of procedure arranged.

In what respects this is the case we will briefly show. One or two remarks should, however, first be made to clear the ground for what follows. We have been speaking and are about to speak—unless it is distinctly stated otherwise—of the census of *England and Wales* only. The Scotch and Irish census will be taken separately through the Registrars-General of those countries. The inhabitants of the Channel Islands and of the Isle of Man will also be counted by independent processes, though under instructions from the English census office: and the numbers of British subjects in foreign States, and of the British population in India and the Colonies—which we understand are again, as at the last census, to be ascertained—will be ascertained by distinct instrumentalities. Once more, with reference to the Army and Navy, and to Merchant Seamen abroad or on board vessels in home ports, special inquiries will

* Census Report of 1871, vol. iv. p. xxxviii.

be made and special returns furnished by the Field Marshal Commanding-in-Chief, the Lords of the Admiralty, and the Board of Customs. While, therefore, the English Census Report will doubtless deal with figures resulting from all these several investigations, the English counting will be distinct from each.

Every census from that of 1841 has been taken by means of those officers throughout the country who have been concerned in the continuous work of registration. The same staff under the direction of the Registrar-General and the Local Government Board is acting on the present occasion. It consists of 629 Superintendent-Registrars presiding over as many Districts, which are mostly co-extensive with Poor-law Unions, and 2,176 Registrars of Births and Deaths acting in that number of sub-districts.

Printed instructions as to the census were issued by the Registrar-General to all these officers at the beginning of January. Every Registrar was required in the first place to draw up a plan for dividing his registration sub-district into enumeration districts. The divisions adopted in 1871 were as far as possible to be followed; but City clearances and suburban expansion—warehouses built in lieu of dwellings, and railways constructed through densely peopled districts on the one hand, and on the other new neighbourhoods created to meet the consequent migration and the natural growth of population—rendered changes necessary in many cases. For example, in the Eastern Metropolitan suburb of Tottenham, where workmen's cottages have of late sprung up in great numbers, and a vastly increased population displaced by town improvements have gone to dwell, completely new arrangements were needed. So also in Islington, Battersea, and many other places.

To divide a given space either in Whitechapel or Westmoreland into convenient tracts for the enumeration of the inhabitants would require thought and care even if the powers of the enumerators alone had to be considered, and if the needless multiplication or undue paucity of those officers were the only errors to be avoided. But in order that the facts disclosed by the census may be made available for the public use they must be ascribed to those various geographical areas with which the nation has to deal in transacting its social business. Hence how best to divide a registration sub-district into districts for enumeration purposes was in many cases no easy problem. The Registrar had to respect with exactness the boundaries of counties, civil parishes, townships, ecclesiastical parishes, municipal boroughs and wards, and rural and urban sanitary districts, and to assimilate to these, as far as possible, the enumeration boundaries, or at any rate to distinguish clearly in his plan each such local area. Sometimes he had to encounter conflicting views with respect to the different limits, sometimes to anticipate imminent but unaccomplished changes. Where, however, he could work upon the old lines, he was spared much of this trouble. He was required further to insert in his plan an estimate of the number of houses and families in each enumera-

tion district created, and to propose for special counting by their heads or masters those institutions in his sub-district containing more than 200 inmates. The scheme was to be set forth in a clear, written description, that each enumerator might be subsequently supplied with a copy of so much of it as delineated his own sphere of action. This preliminary work was despatched, and the plans of division—exhibiting of course various degrees of merit, but on the whole very creditably prepared—were completed and submitted for approval by the middle of February.

The ordinary *Householder's Schedule* provides for the insertion of facts concerning fifteen persons. There are, however, many establishments to which this document could not be conveniently applied, besides those large institutions already referred to whose inmates will be enumerated in a special manner and in special volumes. Such are the numerous hotels, from the *Langham* and the *Midland* in London, and the *North-Western* in Liverpool downwards, in many of which numerous visitors will certainly be found at the time for enumeration. Such, again, are the licensed lodging-houses in the metropolis and other great towns. Refuges of this sort—dignified with the name of “chambers”—abound at the east end of London. When the public-houses are closed on the night of April 3, there will be a rush to these places of shelter by hosts of people of the lowest class, who will pay their 3*d.* for the night's lodging, and will depart again to seek their subsistence at early hours of the morning. Then there are the mansions of the wealthy in town and country, with their numerous staffs of servants, and perhaps their many guests. Returns of these large establishments of every class, with estimates of the numbers which they would probably contain at census-time, had to be made to the Census Office by the Registrars when they sent in their division-plans, in order that suitable schedules might be furnished for the enumeration of the inmates.

The work of counting having been prospectively divided into definite portions by means of the plans, the next step was to find a fit enumerator for every division. Though the pay offered to enumerators was necessarily small, an ample—often a largely excessive—staff of volunteers soon offered themselves to perform the duty of counting. A selection of these was made, and the approved candidates afterwards signed agreements binding themselves duly to execute the task which they had undertaken. The persons best suited, perhaps, to act as enumerators are those whose daily duties specially familiarise them with all the holes and corners of human residence, and with the courses of local boundaries. Such are relieving officers, rate and tax collectors, school attendance officers, sanitary inspectors, &c. A large number of men following these and kindred pursuits are to be found among the enumerators now about to act. In case of any failure in the supply of volunteers for the work, the Local Government Board is empowered by the Census Act (sec. 11) to call upon overseers of the poor, relieving officers, police officers, and others to act as enumerators, under penalty in case of refusal or neglect.

The number of enumerators engaged in taking the census of 1871 was 32,543, besides 627 heads of public or charitable institutions who counted the inmates of the establishments under their charge. The staff is now necessarily larger than it was ten years ago, the ordinary enumerators amounting to about 34,791, and the enumerating heads of institutions to 698.

It may easily be imagined that to distribute among these officers, in the requisite proportions, some *nine millions* of schedules ; to equip each man with his necessary supply of other census-books and documents ; and to provide similarly for those special enumerators, the heads of the large institutions, involved much labour at the Census Office. The Registrar, indeed, was the primary recipient and *local* distributor of these supplies ; but none the less had the wants of each enumerator to be separately considered and met in London. Among the many precautions previously taken by the Registrar-General—aided by his able and experienced staff at the Census Office, Craig's Court—to facilitate the enumerator's work, had been that of appealing to urban sanitary authorities all over the country on the subject of *unnumbered houses and unnamed streets*. All such imperfectly distinguished dwellings endanger the completeness of enumeration ; and the responsible bodies had therefore been urged early in the year to remedy any such deficiencies existing within their jurisdiction.

The more active duties of the enumerator will have begun on Monday, March 28. During the week then commencing he is to deliver for every occupier or lodger within his district a *Householder's Schedule* suitable to the requirements of the particular case. Different indeed in different places will be the conditions, and to some extent the nature of his toil. In unsheltered Anglesey he must take long lonely walks between the scattered farms, beaten perhaps by the cold showers of April, and distributing but few of his schedules—which he will possess printed in *Welsh* as well as English, for the benefit of those within his district whose studies have not extended beyond Keltic literature. In densely-packed Mile End he must spend much of his time in passages and landings, making clear as best he may to Polish Jews the object of his visit and the significance of the document that he carries—of which document he will often have to leave five, six, or even seven copies under one roof. Or, again, in the City of London, amidst palatial buildings five stories high, he will find probably that the ascent and descent of stairs is the most burdensome part of his toil ; for these vast piles, the homes indeed of business, are not the homes of the busy who use them, and often own no resident except the office-keeper under the skylights at the top. With the merchants, professional men, and clerks, who impart to the City its day-time life and bustle, the City enumerator will have no concern ; they will find schedules awaiting them in their Belgravian mansions, suburban villas, or modest homes at Islington or Hackney.

Latest of all, the enumerator's preliminary work is likely to be that of delivering schedules to those temporary sojourners within his boundaries, the dwellers in barges, vans, or tents. His section of the Registrar's "plan" will usually have prepared him for any irregular labour of this sort. In country places, however, he will carefully look out for gipsies who may be camping upon his territory unexpectedly. The halting-places of these wanderers are less defined than they were. Many a common and green lane where their dingy tents, swart faces, and shaggy ponies were once familiar are now to them forbidden ground. They pause and camp where and when they can. If the season is fine and forward as April opens, they will have left their winter quarters in and about the towns, and will be roving through rural England wherever clothes-pegs or other gipsy-wares can be disposed of. The wanderers of different classes have not always on former occasions been found very accessible by the enumerator. They are wont to own dogs of much fierceness and fidelity, inspired with a deep distrust of strangers—more particularly of such as they discern to be representatives of the law. The census officers should use tact in approaching these animals and their masters; and they will in any necessary case seek the aid of the police in discharging their duty.

The census return is to embrace every human being living at midnight on Sunday the 3rd. No person dying before and no child born after that hour will be counted.

On the morning of the 4th, when the collection of schedules is to begin, the rovers lately mentioned will probably receive the enumerator's earliest attention. If his boundaries contain wharves, canals, or any navigated inland waters, he will previously have made special arrangements for obtaining the schedules from the occupants of barges and other craft. We have heard of a barge schedule having been left for the enumerator by agreement under a stone by the canal side, in a case of departure from the district at an exceptionally early hour. The time of high water of course affords the chief opportunity for exit from and entrance into canals where they join tidal rivers. A fleet of barges may then leave and enter the enumerator's jurisdiction. The lock-keeper who must be on duty at the point of junction has sometimes suitably been made enumerator at the places referred to. In all cases where passing craft have to be secured, that officer must needs be much on the alert. He will no doubt board every vessel *entering* his waters on the 4th as well as those which may have been stationary therein on the previous day, that he may learn whether or not the inmates have been enumerated elsewhere. If not, he will take the particulars concerning them on the spot. Similar alacrity must be shown with respect to any houseless people who may have been known to sleep in the district on the night of the 3rd.

With regard to more ordinary enumeration, the experience of past censuses has shown that enumerators must expect in all districts inhabited

by the lower classes to find many blank schedules awaiting them ; though the inconvenience is a diminishing one, and, for a reason to be stated presently, improvement in respect of it may now be specially looked for. The papers are not often lost, but they are left through carelessness or diffidence to be filled up by the Government officer. If necessary he is bound to perform this duty. Whenever he meets with a blank, he will, if possible, see the occupier, or failing him another member of the family, or at any rate some person able to furnish him with the particulars needed for the making out of the schedule. There are some neighbourhoods in which the certainty of his being himself required to fill up a large number of the papers, will oblige him to provide himself with an assistant. Such would be the quarter in Mile End already referred to, inhabited by Polish Jews, or the courts and alleys about Hatton Garden where dwell numerous Italians—the caterers for London in images and street music. On former occasions it has been found desirable in these places to send on the assistant in advance to fill up the schedules, the enumerator following to examine and correct the papers. Friends and neighbours must sometimes, too, be called in to act as interpreters. Among ignorant country-folk good service has been done for the enumerators at past countings by the recognised “scholarls” of benighted spots, who have filled up large numbers of schedules on behalf of their less gifted neighbours. The task of examining has to be performed by the enumerator in all cases, and he will correct the schedules where correction is necessary. One amendment will probably often consist in striking out from the family list, *absent* members of the circle. Absentees must not be counted at home, but at the houses at which they may have slept on the night of the 3rd. Those, however—such as railway officers—gas labourers and others, who are engaged from home during that night, and who will return there on the 4th, must figure in their home schedule. Nor should it be forgotten that all persons who are travelling during the Sunday night will be enumerated at their destinations. If an hotel be their primary resting-place their names will be included in the schedule relating to that hotel ; if they are homeward bound their names will appear in the home return. The census inquiry is made at a time when travellers are likely to be fewest ; but some will necessarily then be on the move. These will be secured as has been stated ; and it may be assumed that they will themselves usually desire not to be left out in the national counting. We have, indeed, heard stories of people who have contrived to travel continuously during census time in order to evade the dread queries of the government. If such persons really exist they must be indifferent citizens. Why should they not extend their journeys to some foreign state in which the census is rarely and badly taken—let us say the Turkish Empire—and never come back ?

The enumerator, it should here be added, will have to count not only persons but houses, distinguishing those inhabited, uninhabited, and

building. The memorandum-book which he will carry on census-day will receive entries of all human dwellings in his district.

There is good reason to believe that these periodical investigations are met in an improved spirit on every succeeding occasion. More schedules are found to be made out each time; and what has been done in the way of elementary education since 1871 ought now greatly to lighten the enumerator's work in this respect, for intelligent children will oftener than formerly be able to lend their aid to parents who are bad writers. It was noticed at the last census in some regions of low character that the *mode* of filling up the papers was much in advance of that adopted in 1861. Whereas at the earlier date the bad characters had sometimes defiantly described themselves by such terms as "Thief," "Thief's wife," "Prig," "Prig's son," and even worse, at the later such designations were not met with. The doubtful class in question had at any rate increased in the interval in outward respect for the Government inquiry. It may be hoped that the present census will show amelioration on one or two points with respect to which there is still room for it, and among offenders of a totally different rank from that just referred to. The intentional misstatement of age was frequently noticed at the census of 1871. "Many women of 30, 40, or more," says the Report of that investigation, "are returned at the ages of 20-30." Direct statements of occupation, too, have been sometimes shirked in a like spirit. In such matters as these, increased candour will, we trust, now be exercised.

When the transactions with the public are ending, the duties of the census officers will be but at their commencement. Having collected all his schedules, the enumerator is next required to enter them under precise rules as to arrangement into an enumeration book, to cast the people and houses enumerated, and finally to deliver the volume with the schedules which are the vouchers for its contents to the local Registrar. This functionary thereupon has to undertake a complete revision of the work done; to see that each different boundary before referred to is clearly indicated in the book; to satisfy himself, by a careful comparison of every entry therein with the division-plan, that no house has been omitted, and in case of any discovered omission to have it made good; in short, to test by every means within his reach each item of information recorded by the enumerator, making all needful corrections, and finally certifying the correctness of the entire contents of the volume. When he has further collected from the heads of any public institutions within his sub-district the enumeration books relating to those establishments, he will be enabled from the facts before him to prepare a summary of the total population and houses in each civil parish or township within his boundaries. This summary furnished by every Registrar throughout the country will yield material for the first public statement as to the results of the census.

Meanwhile, however, the Registrar will pass on to his Superintendent every census document save the *Householder's Schedules*, which he will

despatch to the Census Office in London. A further examination of what has been done will now be effected by the Superintendent, the summary of population especially undergoing his careful revision. When he has completed the examination and certified the correctness of the work, he is required to transmit all the documents to the Census Office.

Here it is that their general signification will be elicited and prepared for publication. The Statute provides that the preliminary Abstract of the Census Returns shall be printed and laid before both Houses of Parliament within three calendar months next after the 1st day of June 1881, if Parliament be sitting, or if Parliament be not sitting then within the first fourteen days of the Session then next ensuing. This Abstract will certainly be ready for presentation before the end of June; in 1871 it was laid before the Houses on the 20th of that month.

But much will yet remain to be accomplished. A *third* revision of the census work will next be undertaken at the central office, and any error or inconsistency in the enumeration books which may have been before overlooked, and which may be now discovered, will be corrected; not, however, before much correspondence has passed, and much reference been made to various local authorities in all parts of the country, will this final scrutiny be deemed complete. Then at length the many and elaborate tables of the full Census Report, which embody in various thoughtfully devised forms of social utility the results of the census inquiry, will be prepared. The final report concerning the last census was dated July 30, 1873. It consisted of four thick folio volumes, for the most part closely packed with tabular matter, but embracing a succinct general statement of census discoveries and other valuable information. It included not only the results of the English census, but also the leading features of that of the United Kingdom, of India, and of almost all the British Colonies and Dependencies. It may therefore be said to have set forth the main facts of an *Imperial* enumeration, and it was the first report that had done so. The forthcoming report will not, as we have intimated already, be wanting in the same elements of interest. It may be not out of place to recall, before we close, a few of the leading figures revealed in the weighty tomes just spoken of—to remind the reader where the empire and its more important centres stood as to numbers when the last enumeration took place.

The counted population of the *Empire* in 1871 was 234,762,593 souls. These people were living upon 7,769,449 square miles of territory, in about 44,142,651 houses, huts, or tents. The enumerated inhabitants of the *United Kingdom*, including the Army, Navy, and Merchant Seamen abroad, amounted to 31,845,379 persons; those of *England and Wales* to 22,856,164; and those of *London* to 3,254,260. No *imperial* census having been before attempted, the grand total above given can be compared with no earlier figures. The people of the *United Kingdom* had been added to between 1861 and 1871 by more than two millions and a half, the numbers for the former year having been 29,321,288. In

England and Wales the population had also increased during the same period by more than two millions and a half, the earlier figures having stood at 20,228,497; and in *London* the numbers had been augmented in the same interval by nearly half a million, the former enumeration having given 2,803,989 as the sum of the inhabitants of the metropolis.

No attempt will here be made to foreshow the figures to be disclosed as the issue of the present inquiry. It is enough to express confidence, firstly, that a substantial further advance in numbers will be found to have taken place; and, secondly that the existing generation will do its utmost to render the forthcoming return as perfect as possible. Any one responsible for a schedule may further the fulfilment of this latter anticipation by preparing that document for the enumerator at an *early hour* of Monday, April 4, entering thereon the required particulars with absolute clearness, completeness, and accuracy.

E. W.





1. HE HAD IT OUT AT A MAN'S LENGTH, SO THAT THE OTHERS COULD SEE IT.

A Grape from a Thorn.

By JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER XIV.

A CONFESSION.



WHY Clover Cottage was so called had remained a mystery even to the oldest inhabitants of Wallington until Mr. Felspar had discovered it. The Dryasdusts, of course, would have held that, it being the most ancient dwelling-house in the place, it had originally stood in the fields and been surrounded by the herb in question. But the painter stoutly held that the herb had nothing to do with it, and that the name arose from an antique song of praise sung by generation after

generation of grateful lodgers who had lived under that hospitable roof in clover. It was incontestable that the Dame was a good and liberal housewife, whatever her foremothers may have been before her, and she had a weakness for youthful lodgers of the male sex.

There is something, I cannot tell what it may be,
About good-looking gentlemen aged twenty-three,
Which affects female hearts in no common degree;
Ugly or pretty, stupid or witty,
Young or old, they experience in country or city
What is clearly not love, yet it's warmer than pity.

And this was the case with Mrs. Gammer, who, though Mrs. but by courtesy, was of the mature age of sixty-five, and might be supposed (by those ignorant of the subject) to have survived the tender passion. If she had had any professional rivals in the place—which she had not, for

Clover Cottage was the only house that accommodated visitors—they might justly have complained that she spoilt her lodgers, and the market; and, indeed, anything in stronger contrast to the ordinary ways of landladies than *her* ways could not be imagined. Her first solicitude was to make her guests comfortable; the last idea to enter her head (indeed it never got there) would have been to take advantage of their confidence. In her personal appearance nature had made some mistakes: she should obviously have been plump and buxom and typical of plenty; whereas she was tall and spare. Her hair should have been white but plentiful, as befits elderly persons who practise philanthropy; whereas doubts were entertained (and even expressed) by her enemies whether she had any hair at all. She had, indeed, a substitute for it in a front of brown curls; but these were of such an amazing size and uncompromising rigidity, that they imposed upon no one. They no more resembled real ringlets than the stone peaches on the mantel-piece in her private parlour resembled genuine wall-fruit.

Mr. Michael Felspar had lodged with this lady for three summers; during the first she had called him "Mr. Felspar," during the second he had been "Mr. Michael," and now he was "Mr. Mike." Mr. Vernon had only been with her that spring; but, being a friend of Mr. Felspar's, Mrs. Gammer had grown more familiar with him earlier, and he was already "Mr. Walter." One would have thought, to have heard them talking together, that they were two brothers and that she was their mother; and yet her familiarity was not of the sort that breeds contempt. She never forgot she was their landlady. Some very great ladies have a similar faculty of playing two rôles at once.

When Vernon came home with his arm in a sling, he knew better than to talk to this good lady of adders; she was one of those simple creatures who confuse these reptiles with rattlesnakes, and believe that a cat, if she catches you asleep, will suck your breath.

"Good gracious, Mr. Walter, what on earth have happened?" Then, with a sudden change from curiosity to presentiment, "I'll lay my life it's a hornet."

"You are always right, Mrs. Gammer," was his cheerful reply. "My head's in a buzz as though I were still in the thick of them; so the Doctor has recommended me to lie down."

"But hornets don't buzz, Mr. Walter."

The man of letters was unacquainted with this fact of natural history; a little more experience in his craft would have taught him never to commence a fiction of a technical kind without consulting an expert. He was so young that his conscience even pricked him for deceiving a woman that had a kindness for him, and his face betrayed it.

"Lord a mercy, don't ye tell me it's a mad dog!" continued the old lady, clasping her skinny but useful fingers.

For a single instant he felt a strong desire to bark and frisk upon the doorstep, but humanity asserted itself; he told her all like a man,

with the assurance, however, that Dr. Cooper, whom she believed to be as infallible as the Pope, thought nothing of it. "If my blood had been in a bad state with the living at the hotel, for instance" (this really was a pretty touch of his art), "I should have been ill for a week; but, as I get nothing but what is wholesome at Clover Cottage, there is nothing to be apprehended. All that is recommended to me is quiet and milk arrowroot."

By the happy invention of this prescription, the patient procured the first panacea at once; for Mrs. Gammer left him to his own devices while she hurried off to get ready the second, for the preparation of which she flattered herself, as he well knew, she had a peculiar gift.

When Mrs. Armytage in due course arrived with her olive oil and wool, the invalid, to her great indignation, was denied to her. "He had already taken," said Mrs. Gammer, "what Dr. Cooper had ordered him, and was forbidden to receive company."

"But he will see *me*?" insisted Mrs. Armytage.

"Indeed, ma'am, it is impossible," was the dry rejoinder. "Mr. Charles is abed."

It must be understood, as some mitigation of this pious fraud, that in the meanwhile Mrs. Gammer had learnt that her young favourite's ailment had been indirectly caused by Mrs. Armytage herself, and that she thought herself justified in using any means for excluding from his presence his would-have-been assassin. Vernon was not in bed, but in his sitting-room smoking a pipe and composing his bespoken poem upon the "Italian Organ Boy." It was a room of considerable size if you counted in its large bow window, and, though bare of furniture, was full of miscellaneous objects connected with literature and art. Two immense tobacco jars, with sealskin and indiarubber pouches in profusion; half-a-dozen packs of cards not over clean; wax matches everywhere, not excepting on the carpet; yesterday's *Times*, and several copies of the *Mayfair Keepsake*, some of them with illustrations not to be found in the originals; and a silver tankard with a glass bottom. These were common to the two tenants of the apartment; but on the table of each were the tools of their respective trades; on the one, palettes, pencils, and paint-boxes; on the other, pens (some gnawed to the quick in the agonies of composition), Shelley, Keats, and a rhyming dictionary. On the wall, some book shelves pretty well filled, and a few unframed sketches, full of freshness and vigour, redeemed this somewhat Bohemian state of affairs.

Felspar, who had come home to console the invalid, was not as usual at his work, but sitting with his chair a tilt and his arms at the back of his head, which was his attitude of reflection. His eyes were fixed on his friend with a certain tender gravity, evoked perhaps by the contemplation of the process of inspiration.

"Look here, old fellow," he said presently; "you don't seem to get on very well with that left hand of yours. Can't I write the thing out for you?"

"Well; I was thinking of asking you, but it seemed too like dictation."

Felspar shut his eyes and laughed to himself, as his custom was when gently tickled. "My dear Vernon," he said, "you have considerable humour; but, like Liston, you imagine yourself to be a serious being. Why will you persist in writing poetry?"

"I do but sing because I must,
And pipe but as the linnets sing,"

was the other's modest reply. "Are you ready? Is your pen full of ink? The least hitch on your part may be as fatal as the call of the tax-gatherer was to Coleridge's *Kubla Khan*."

"Are you so very full of the god?"

"Brimming."

"Stop a bit, man; what's the title? The '*Italian Boy*' reminds one of Burke and Hare. What do you think of the '*Grinder*'? It's full of fun, of course."

"It's nothing of the kind, sir. On the contrary, it's most uncommonly pathetic. The youth is an exile——"

"Oh, yes; I remember," said Felspar, "and he compares British with Italian scenery."

"Well, yes; I confess I think that view of his position a happy one."

"It was Miss Josceline's," observed Felspar, quietly.

"Yes; but she did not reserve the copyright, I believe;" he said this a little curtly; then adding with mock gaiety, "Be so good as to favour me with your attention, Mr. *Amanuensis*," he began to walk rapidly up and down the room dictating as he did so:—

Your sun is bright, your skies are blue,
The shadows on your hills are few;
But yet I miss the golden noon
And yet the soft Italian hue.

For what I know, your mountain lines
Are grand and tall as Apennines;
But I do long for their clear heights
And their long rows of purple vines.

Your woods for bird may wave as free,
Your flowers as fair may smile for bee;
But, ah, I pine for leaf and bloom
That blows and beams athwart the sea.

"Is that all?" inquired Felspar.

"Well; the editor only wanted three verses; and one only gets the same money for four, you see."

"Very good, my dear Vernon; you will succeed in literature."

"You really like the little poem, do you, then?" replied the other eagerly, with an author's blush.

"I did not say so. I only said you would succeed in your profession because you are so economical of your ideas. It is a fine thing not to

spoil the market. Half a guinea for three verses is three-and-sixpence a verse, whereas half-a-guinea for four verses——"

"Is beyond your powers of calculation," put in Vernon, laughing.

"I could do it if you gave me time," said Felspar, confidently.

"It would be a sum in very long division, then. The idea of an artist attempting mathematics!"

"And this is because I have not praised his poem!" exclaimed Felspar, appealing through the open window to universal nature. "Oh, *irritable genus!* My dear Vernon, the lines are really good. There is not quite enough trellis work perhaps for the greenery; one sees the sun through it too much."

"Ah! there I differ from you; I should say, now, though far from obscure, if anything it was too suggestive."

Felspar tossed his tawny hair, and laughed loud and long. "To please a poet the praise must be 'thick and slab,' indeed, like witches' soup," he said.

"You are quite right, my dear Felspar, and I am a vain fool," answered Vernon, penitently. "But I confess I was rather sweet upon those verses; I thought of them as I came down from the Daneclyff. They seemed to come much more naturally than verses for the *Keepsake* generally do."

"And yet you were going to the Doctor's to be treated for snake-bite!" said Felspar, gravely.

"Yes; if the case ends fatally," answered the other, smiling, "the poem will have quite a tragic interest, like the wild swan's Death Hymn. You don't think the parallel very complete?"

"You are much more like a wild swan than a tame one, at all events," admitted Felspar.

"And yet do you know, old fellow," said Vernon, softly, "I don't feel so wild as I did. I have a sensation—not an unpleasant one, but very sobering—of having had my wings clipped."

"Indeed!" answered Felspar, with an affectation of indifference which the other's keen sense of observation would easily have detected had not his mind been monopolised by something else; "and by whom?"

"By Cupid's shears. Of course it sounds ridiculous that in such a very little time and on so slight an acquaintance——"

"The operation seldom takes very long," put in Felspar, with a quiet smile.

"That is true; I should not have spoken about it, however, at all events not yet, but for that promise we made to one another—just as two people agree that whoever should die first shall tell the other all about it, you know."

"Which they never do," interrupted Felspar.

"No; because they can't keep their promise; but about love you can, you see. Whichever of us was first 'smitten' was to tell the other, you remember, how it felt."

"To be sure ; I recollect," answered the other, in a low, mechanical tone ; "and how *does* it feel ?"

"It feels," said Vernon, taking his pipe from his mouth and looking out on the horizon, "like a metamorphosis ; as though, having been little better than a brute, I was changed into a man. It feels, though I know I am but dreaming, that I have something now to work for and to live for which is not myself. Number one has vanished, and number two has become the unit of existence. It feels as though a word of praise from her I love would outweigh all the 'hebdomadal immortality,' as you once called it, that was ever conferred by the critics of the *Parthenon*."

And here he stopped and pulled softly at his pipe, which would otherwise have expired through his eloquence. Felspar had taken up a sketch-book and was at work with his pencil, but he kept his face to his friend. "And why should you say, 'I know I am but dreaming ?'" he inquired.

"Because I know it is so. I am penniless as compared with her, and I have not the gift of accumulation, nor even of taking care of the pennies. I am not such a fool, nor yet so base, as to think seriously of asking her to share such a lot as mine"—he pointed contemptuously to the pipes and cards and dog-eared books—"I worship her from afar, and am content. 'The desire of the moth for the star, of the night for the morrow,' which I used to think vague and high falutin', is really the expression that suits me ; I do not flatter myself with the hope of getting nearer to her. Only it is just this, Felspar, that if I thought I was about to die of this flea-bite"—and he touched his wounded hand—"I swear to you it would give me pleasure, since it would seem to me that I had perished in preserving her."

"And you have seen this young lady but twice, I believe, in your life, and only in the last twenty-four hours ?" observed Felspar, quietly.

"Just so. I have seen the sunrise about as often, and may never see it again ; but, for all that, I shall often think of it, and never forget it. I now know what the man meant who said that to have enjoyed the acquaintance of a certain lady was to have received a liberal education. You are thinking me a fool, of course ; but you will observe that I am not such a fool as to suppose that this dream of mine can have any fulfilment. I am not telling it to you, as Pharaoh's butler told his to Joseph, with a view to interpretation, for it needs none. I am only keeping my word with you. And mind, old fellow, when your time comes, you keep your word with me."

"Very good. If it ever should come, I will," answered Felspar, slowly.

"You talk like an old bachelor, and you are but twenty-eight," exclaimed Vernon, laughing. "You look like one of those who preach the damnable doctrine that men are better without wives—a celibate, a misogynist. What the deuce has come to you ? You could not wear a graver face if I had suggested proposing myself to the Hon. George Emilius Josceline as a son-in-law in form : 'I have but a hundred a year,

sir, it is true, but I have Genius with an enormous G.' Come, advise me, my philosopher and friend, as to this passion of my soul; though, indeed, I can read your thought in your face. You would bid me 'pluck it from my bosom though my heart be at the root,' and you would be quite right."

"I would bid you do nothing of the kind, Vernon. It is a matter, indeed, in which one man can scarcely advise another."

"And yet you told me once that your real reason for entering into our little compact was that you might have the opportunity, when I fell in love, of pulling me out of it, and saving me from the consequences of what was sure to be a great folly."

"Did I? That must have been in joke. I take it for granted," added Felspar, with a certain abrupt severity, "that you are not in joke now?"

"Certainly not, my dear fellow. One does not joke, as Mr. Serjeant Buzfuz observed, with the heart seared. Seriously, I am so far gone that when Mr. Josceline said he should come to ask after me to-morrow, accompanied by his daughter, my heart seemed to stop beating, and then, as if to make up for lost time, went on at the rate of—well, I should say, twenty miles an hour."

"I never heard of a heart going so far as that," replied Felspar, drily. "But that reminds me that I have not had my daily stretcher, and after a picnic one wants it more than usual. I suppose I can leave you without anxiety?"

"As regards the snake-bite, most certainly; and as to the other wound"—and Vernon touched his heart, and laughed—"that is past remedy."

Felspar took his hat—a wide-awake, purchased of the Wallington general purveyor, and which needed much the title of "sombbrero" which Vernon had bestowed upon it to invest it with picturesqueness—and left the cottage. He took the path to the coastguard station, which led over the cliffs for miles. The afternoon was hot, but he did not feel the heat; the views of sea and land were more glorious even than usual, but for once they had no attraction for him. He was thinking of his friend and of the strange confession he had just made to him. That it had been made in a half jocular form did not make it less serious; that was Vernon's way of alluding to any matter, however deeply he might feel it. Nor did Vernon's assertion that his sudden passion for Miss Josceline was, he was well aware, an impracticable dream afford Felspar much consolation on his friend's account. If Vernon had really felt it to be so, there would have been no need to mention it, for one doesn't tell one's dreams. Moreover, it had so happened that Felspar had given very particular attention, not only to Vernon's behaviour towards the young lady in question, but also to the manner in which his attentions had been received; and that they had been welcome to her he felt certain. Again, as to the little incident of the snake-bite, it was natural that Miss Josceline should have expressed concern about Vernon, who had been injured in

preserving her from injury ; but there are many ways of expressing concern, and it struck Felspar that in Miss Josceline's way there had been tenderness as well as gratitude. And as he said to himself, not once nor twice, but often during that solitary walk, "And wherefore not?" Vernon was handsome, with manners exceedingly prepossessing, witty, or with the high spirits that easily pass for wit, and, indeed, are more attractive. This could not be gainsaid, and by Felspar least of all men ; for the young fellow had won his way into the painter's own heart through his possession of those very gifts, and of much better ones, which it only needed knowledge of the man to discover. A franker or a more generous spirit did not exist ; nor, notwithstanding that little touchiness about his poem, a more modest one withal. "I shall never do much for myself, and far less for the world, in my own calling," he had once said to Felspar. "I pursue it because I love it ; because it is the pleasantest method that suggests itself for making my bread ; and that my devotion is not reciprocated is not my fault. I have often read that a man should not take to letters as a calling unless he experiences a certain divine inspiration, or at least a confidence that he will reach the top of the tree ; but why should it be so ? A man is not dissuaded from the law because he has doubts of becoming Lord Chancellor ; or from the Church because he feels it improbable he shall one day lodge in Lambeth Palace. Perhaps I might make more money—though I doubt it—in one of the more recognised professions ; but I am deficient in the *auri sacra fames*—the passion for dying a millionaire that possesses so many excellent people. I had rather have a little and do what I like, than acquire a great deal by working against the grain."

This might not be very sensible, looked at from the man-of-the-world standpoint ; but Felspar was not a man of the world, and this candid statement of his young friend's opinion had recommended itself to him. It would not do so, of course, to most people ; to some indeed, such as Mr. Josceline, for example, as he imagined, the very adoption of such a pursuit as literature would count against his young friend ; its frequent failures, its small successes, and the very moderate social position it confers upon its disciples, would make it contemptible ; but in the eyes of a few, themselves given to intellectual pursuits—young, too, and hopeful, and setting small store on material things—Vernon's calling would be an interesting one, and none the less so because it was precarious. In Miss Josceline's eyes, for example, unless he was much mistaken, it would be interesting.

One would have thought that to Mr. Felspar, while these reflections ran through his mind, it might have occurred that his own position in life was something akin to that of his young friend, while it had the undoubted advantage of being much more assured. He was an older man than Vernon, it is true ; but he was still young, and could boast both of promise and performance. He was already making a small but sufficient income of his own, and, had he chosen to restrict his attention to the

portrait-taking branch of his profession (for which he had a considerable reputation), might do very well for himself. But if any comparison between himself and his friend did enter his mind, it came and went as swiftly as the sea-gull that occasionally crossed the patch of blue sky above him "with one waft of her wing." It had happened to him once in a far distant land to walk with a friend for miles in a lonely, sterile track. At a certain gully where there was water and they had stopped to bathe, he had picked up a small rough lump of something which looked to him to be gold, of which there had of late been great discoveries in that neighbourhood; but being reticent by nature, doubting his own scanty stock of science, and also, perhaps (for he was younger then), sensitive to ridicule, he had said nothing of it at the time, intending to confide in his friend later if he found his hopes confirmed. But that very evening, as they sat in their log hut together—for they were dwelling in the wilds—his friend had laid his hand upon his knee and earnestly exclaimed, "I have a secret to confide to you, old fellow, which will make both our fortunes. In Danton Creek to-day (the name of the gully) I found gold. The place is mine to work in by miners' law, and as soon as I can get my claim you shall halve it. Felspar had his own nugget in his pocket while the other spoke, but forbore to produce it. He would not rob his friend of the pleasure of an act of generosity, nor would he accept the half share of the claim, though he took some of it. His companion, who had recognised the gold at a glance, and had been the first to speak of it, had to Felspar's mind the prior right to the discovery. And something of the same kind had happened that day to Vernon and himself; but, alas! the claim could not be shared.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CALL.

ON the morrow, Vernon's hand was pronounced by the Doctor, who called upon him professionally, to be doing fairly well; and after a late breakfast he pulled his arm-chair to the window with the intention, as usual, of smoking his pipe.

"I think you had better not do that," observed Felspar, who had been more silent that morning even than usual, and apparently much engaged with his pencil.

"Better not do what?" inquired the other in amazement; "not smoke?"

"Considering that a lady is coming to pay you a visit," continued Felspar, grimly, "I certainly think you had better not. Clover Cottage is not a very aristocratic abode, but why make it like a public-house?"

"Miss Josceline told me she did not object to smoke," replied Vernon.

"Still, her father probably does—at least, to pipe-smoking; he is the

sort of man, I fancy, who thinks it vulgar to have anything in one's mouth but a cigarette."

"Very likely," said Vernon, proceeding deliberately to light his pipe; "I should think he was a man less charitable to vulgarity, or what he conceives to be such, than to worse things."

Felspar put down his pencil, and stared earnestly at his companion, who, unconscious of his gaze, continued to admire the landscape from the window seat, or to seem to do so.

"Pray, remember, my dear Felspar, that I do not deceive myself in this matter in any respect. If there were not half a dozen other obstacles to the realisation of this dream of mine, I believe the character of my proposed papa-in-law would be an insuperable one; we have nothing in common, he and I."

"You seem to have observed him very closely, considering your opportunities."

"I have. It is my trade to take stock of my fellow-creatures. We speak of some people as having all their faults upon the surface; with Mr. Josceline it is quite the reverse; all his virtues—such as they are—are made the most of; and they are only imitations of virtues. Instead of having true delicacy of feeling, he is merely fastidious; in place of independence of character, he shows a careless indifference which, however, changes to an affectation of polite interest when it is worth his while. Do you not notice what court he pays to your friend, Mrs. Jennynge, and how civil he is to Mr. Aird? It is because he believes them to be wealthy."

"I wonder," said Felspar, gently, and as if to himself, "whether this individual, thus graphically described, has ever adopted a contrary course towards any young gentleman he supposed to be poor. Instead of affecting a polite interest, I mean, is it possible that he has ever snubbed him?"

"No; to do him justice, I can't say that he has," replied Vernon, frankly; "he is so good as to endure me—at a distance."

"His tolerance does not appear to be reciprocated," observed Felspar, drily. "I do not deny your powers of intuition, my dear fellow; but, although the study of character may be a man's calling, it does not follow that his judgments are always right. Your experience of life is as yet necessarily limited, which renders you liable to mistakes, and, in this case, are you sure you are not swayed by personal prejudice? You talk about the difference of views entertained by yourself and Mr. Josceline as being an obstacle in relation to a certain matter, but is not that gentleman himself an obstacle? I am not a student of human nature by profession; I am only a painter. But I have lived in the world longer than you have."

"You are a better judge of men than I am," broke in the other; "I grant that; and I dare say of women, too. To you my passion for this *Dulcinea* may seem utterly incomprehensible; but it has caused me to

observe her closely, to remember every word she has uttered, to treasure it up——”

“We need not discuss the young lady,” interrupted Felspar, coldly; “we were talking of her father.”

“Very good; let us finish with him first. Now, upon your honour, Felspar”——and the young man turned his chair round and confronted his friend——“do you really like Mr. Josceline?”

“I think he is the most agreeable man I ever met.”

“That’s no answer to my question. I allow that his powers of pleasing—or rather of making himself pleasant—are extraordinary. In the billiard-room the other night, under great disadvantages, he acquitted himself in that way to admiration; but there is no naturalness about him; he gives one the idea of an actor; whereas his daughter——”

“Let me again remind you, we are talking of the father, my dear fellow.”

“True; well, he strikes me as the most polished of actors.”

“Which is surely high praise,” returned Felspar. “He exerted himself, too, for our sakes; there was nothing charged for admission. You are like the people who go to the play with orders; they are always the most critical. Why should this gentleman have troubled himself, unless from good nature, to make himself agreeable at all? It is not the way with those who find everybody (as he has done) at the *Ultramarine* ready to worship him. And as to his acting, his rôle of father at least strikes me as nature itself.”

“Yes; I admit it, he is fond of his daughter,” observed Vernon, slowly.

“Are you sure, then, that you are not prejudiced against him on that account? That is to say, would you not like him better if he struck you as less resolute to assert (which he does, somehow, without assertion) her position and his own?”

“I think not; I hope not,” said Vernon, doubtfully; “if I were so influenced, it would prove me to be a fool—a madman.”

“At all events, I think it would be very bad manners to show any dislike to him. And if—if you have the regard for Miss Josceline of which you speak, it strikes me that for her sake you should pay her father due deference and respect.”

“Would you have me truckle to him for his daughter’s sake?” exclaimed Vernon, pacing the room excitedly. “Would you have me put it in his power to tell me some day, in his smooth, gracious way, that I was giving myself very unnecessary trouble in making myself agreeable to him?”

“Good heavens! Do you suppose, then, that he entertains any suspicion of your passion?”

“Of course not; and he never shall. No one but yourself shall ever do that. I am sorry that I told even you.”

“So am I,” returned Felspar, gravely; “that is,” he added, quickly,

"if it distresses you to have done so. But, having confided in me, it is surely allowable to offer you a friend's advice."

"Of course it is, my dear Felspar. And, as it happens, I am wise enough to take it. You will have no cause to complain of my behaviour to Mr. Josceline. Only I will not go one hair's breadth out of my way to make what is called a good impression on him."

"Very good; there is, however, no occasion to make a bad impression. I am sorry you insist on smoking; but, at all events, let me entreat you to put somewhere out of sight of your expected visitors that choice but not very attractive collection of pipes; those dog-eared railway volumes, and especially that yellow French novel; and those packs of playing cards, which suggest the idea of our being a couple of gamblers who practise our art assiduously at home before sallying out to cheat the public."

"I will put away the French novel, Felspar, but not the rest," said Vernon, decisively. "I am not going to sail under false colours. There is my table, the table of Thomas Idle; and there is yours, by comparison a very neat and tidy one, and obviously the table of Francis Goodchild——By Jove! here they are at the door."

And, in spite of his resolve to appear at his worst, Mr. Vernon hurriedly knocked the ashes from his pipe, and if his arm had not been in a sling would have run his fingers through his hair.

The next moment Mr. Josceline and his daughter were announced.

"We are come to inquire after the invalid," said that gentleman, gaily. "I need hardly ask, however, having seen him, 'Is he better?'"

Indeed, Vernon's face was of a colour which, if it was not an evidence of high fever, was calculated to set the anxieties of his friends at rest on the score of health.

"I am quite ashamed to have brought you here, and especially Miss Josceline," replied the sick man, "upon what must seem to be such false pretences. I feel like a rank impostor. Except that my right hand is a little swollen, there is nothing whatever the matter with me."

"But there might have been, Mr. Vernon," said Ella, gravely. "I have come to thank you——"

"Oh, please don't!" interrupted Vernon. "I have done nothing to earn thanks, and if you only knew the pleasure——" He hesitated, and then stopped short, covered with confusion and humiliation. The earnest, eager words had escaped him unconsciously; but directly they had passed his lips, he recognised what he had said, and the tone of it; and bitterly regretted both.

"Now, that's very prettily said," remarked Mr. Josceline, with an air of extreme good nature. "Mr. Vernon would have you believe, Ella, that the aspic's bite is quite a luxury—like aspic jelly."

"At all events, I beg to state that *I* have suffered," observed Felspar. "For, as Vernon's hand was lamed, I have had to act as his amanuensis, and in that capacity have had not only to listen to one of his own poems, but to write it down."

"You ought to have considered it a great privilege," said Mr. Josceline, with pretended indignation. "What a snug bachelor's room you two gentlemen have got here!" And he glanced admiringly at the cheap railway volumes as though he were in the Bodleian—and in the presence of the librarian."

"We play a little piquet together occasionally in the evenings," explained Mr. Felspar, putting in a word of apology for the cards.

"But generally cribbage," put in Vernon; "and not only in the evenings, but also on wet days."

"And quite right too," remarked Mr. Josceline, approvingly. "I have always thought that cribbage is not sufficiently appreciated. It teaches one arithmetic, for one thing."

"I wish it would teach *me*," said Vernon. "Arithmetic is one of the things (like Lord Dundreary) I can never understand."

"Ah, that is because you have so much imagination!" returned Mr. Josceline. "The wretched details of addition and subtraction of pounds, shillings, and pence, are always offensive to a man of letters."

"Fortunately, however, his calling does not demand much acquaintance with pounds, shillings, and pence; or, at all events, with pounds," observed Vernon.

"Then, in that case," remarked Felspar, drily, "the general opinion as to the sums made by literary men in these days must be very erroneous. I know many living writers—by name at least—who have the reputation of making large incomes by their pens."

"Oh, the reputation!" replied Vernon, scornfully. "I could have had the reputation of making 50*l.* by a poem of five hundred lines, if I had chosen to have it."

"Dear me! Now that's very interesting," said Mr. Josceline; "you could have got two shillings a line, if you pleased, for writing a poem that took you how long?"

"Well, perhaps two months, off and on."

"Now that's marvellous! No less than three hundred a year, if you could always have gone on writing!"

"Yes; but I did not say I could have got the 50*l.*, but only the reputation of having got it," said Vernon, coldly. "As a matter of fact, I should only have netted 5*l.*"

"I don't understand," said Mr. Josceline.

"Well; few people would," continued Vernon smiling. "The circumstances were these. A certain weekly newspaper—price two-pence——"

"That presupposes nothing," observed Felspar, in allusion to the other's contemptuous air. "It may have been twopence to buy, but ten thousand a year in the pockets of the proprietors."

"It may have been; but it wasn't," continued Vernon, coolly. "The *Bloodred Banner*, as it was called, was, I have reason to suspect, in no very prosperous circumstances when it offered a prize of 50*l.* for the best

poem of five hundred lines upon the subject of 'Liberty.' I was a candidate for it, and, I may say, the successful one, since I received a private communication from the editor to say if I would accept 5*l*. instead of the 50*l*. I should have all the honours of victory, and have my name and address printed as the winner. I did not accept the generous proposal; but, as I have said, I might have done it, and so far secured a reputation."

"But what a dreadful man the editor must have been!" exclaimed Ella.

"Well; he was not a very nice man," answered Vernon, laughing; "but I conclude his proprietors were the people to blame in that matter."

"A most interesting revelation, I am sure," observed Mr. Josceline. "It is quite delightful to get, as it were, behind the scenes of literature in this way."

"The *Bloodred Banner* could scarcely be called literature," remarked Felspar; "and no one is more aware of the fact than Vernon."

"Well; I think that's very hard," said Mr. Josceline, laughing, "considering that our young friend here wrote for it."

"But then, papa, he did not know at that time what sort of people they were," remarked Ella; "and I am sure he had nothing more to do with them when he found it out."

"Well; I confess I did not enter into any more competitions for their prize poems," admitted Vernon, smiling.

"He might also confess, Miss Josceline, if he chose," said Felspar, "that he never again wrote for the *Banner*. To do him justice, he is not a person to sail under false pretences, or to associate with those who do."

"Nay; you must really not say that, Felspar," said Vernon, with a laugh that had a curious sort of bitterness in it, "since you know all about the *Village Lytch-Gate*."

"Now what was that?" inquired Mr. Josceline. "I dare say it is very entertaining, though the name sounds a little melancholy."

"It sounds very melancholy," assented Vernon, "and was intended to be so. The *Village Lytch-Gate* was a magazine started to attract the melancholy public, which is a very large one. I was one of its staff. I wrote an article monthly called 'The Vicar's Musings;' they were signed 'The Old Vicar.' I was then about eighteen. They used to begin in this way: 'From the window where I now sit my eye rests upon my wife's grave; fresh flowers are strewn upon it. She is not lost, but gone before,' and so on. They were thought a good deal of by the melancholy newspapers, the favourable notices of which I used to read with avidity: 'The Old Vicar is as thoughtful and serene as ever this week;' 'The Old Vicar will be widely read, and do good,' &c. He could not, however, have been very widely read," added Vernon, "because the magazine expired in its fourth month."

It was curious to watch the different effect of the recital of this

literary experience, which was given in the most humorous manner, in the faces of those who listened to it. That of Mr. Felspar was very grave; he felt that Vernon was sinking lower and lower in the opinion of their visitors with every word he spoke, and, though he knew that the young fellow was designedly making the worst of himself, he was powerless to remove the bad impression thus created. What he told was true in the main, and could not be contradicted. He was telling it, as Felspar well understood, in a sort of desperation; he wished his two visitors to understand that he was but a free-lance of literature, with as little principle as prosperity—a “detrimental” of the very saddest class. That he had quite succeeded in attaining this object, so far as Mr. Josceline was concerned, was evident, and also that it was the very impression which that gentleman would have had him convey. His face expressed an amused contempt, which annoyed Felspar exceedingly. Ella’s countenance, on the other hand, though it had a tinge of sadness in it, as though she regretted that Vernon had assumed, even in the pages of a magazine, a fictitious character, and especially such a one as he had impersonated, was full of the liveliest interest; and this, perhaps, pained Felspar—though he would not have owned it even to himself—more than her father’s scorn. She had not been able to avoid laughing, even at the most serious parts of the young man’s recital, and when he finished she certainly looked much more amused than shocked.

“A most entertaining experience,” observed Mr. Josceline, “and, what is more, so thoroughly characteristic. This Bohemian sort of existence of yours, my dear Mr. Vernon, must surely have great charms.”

“Yes,” returned the young man gravely; “in some respects it has an advantage over even the possession of large estates; for property, one always hears it said, has its duties as well as its privileges: whereas those who pursue the calling of literature are looked upon by the world at large as irresponsible for their actions, and nothing in the way of respectability is expected of them.”

“And a very agreeable position, too, I should imagine,” remarked Mr. Josceline, with the air of a man who, for his own part, was the pink of propriety, and had served the office of churchwarden in his parish for many years. “By-the-bye, Mr. Felspar,” he added, “before we bring our most interesting visit to Clover Cottage to a close, my daughter has something to say to you, I believe, respecting her progress in Art.”

“Oh, papa! how can you?” remonstrated Ella. “I merely told my father, Mr. Felspar, that I should trouble you for your opinion, and perhaps for a hint or two, since you were so good as to offer them, respecting a little drawing I did last night. When you happen to be at the hotel I shall get you to look at it.”

“Oh, but I’ve brought it with me!” said Mr. Josceline, quietly. “I thought that is what you wanted, my dear; at all events, it will give Mr. Felspar less trouble to ask him about it here. One may accept advice from a physician as a friend, if one meets him in the street; but

if you summon him for a consultation, that is a professional matter, and should be recompensed accordingly."

At this juncture the post arrived with a letter for Vernon. "There, my dear Ella, while Mr. Vernon is reading his correspondence—which I hope he will do, or he will make us quite uncomfortable—you can lay your little difficulties before Mr. Felspar. That is my daughter's drawing; it seems to represent an Italian organ-grinder."

Vernon had broken the envelope of his letter; but at these words he desisted from further attempts in that direction, and listened with all his ears. His heart beat so fast and loud that he thought the others must hear it.

"The young foreigner," continued Mr. Josceline, with the drawing held critically before him, "has placed his objectionable instrument upon the ground, and, though evidently in a picturesque part of the country, is regarding the works of nature with anything but an appreciative eye. He is apparently saying to himself, 'This locality is very inferior to what I am accustomed to at home.'"

"If I am not mistaken," said Mr. Felspar, quietly, "that is the very impression Miss Josceline wished to convey. We were talking on the subject on our way to the picnic yesterday; for my friend Vernon——"

"Indeed, Mr. Felspar," interrupted Ella, appealingly, though in a tone she did her best to render indifferent, "I would much rather that the consideration of my poor drawing was left to some other time. It is a positive waste of opportunities, since you have your own portfolio here; and both papa and I are so desirous to see those sketches of Wallington Bay and its neighbourhood, which we have heard are so beautiful."

"Yes, indeed," said Mr. Josceline; "next to making due inquiry after our young friend, our object in coming here was the hope of our being so favoured, I do assure you."

With a bow and a quiet smile Mr. Felspar undid the strings of the portfolio, when the very first drawing that presented itself, to his own horror and to the astonishment of his visitors, was a portrait of Miss Ella Josceline. It was but an outline, rapidly sketched in while his friend had been talking to him on the subject of the original on the previous evening; but for whom it was intended there could be no doubt.

"Why, dear me, that's you, Ella," observed Mr. Josceline, drily.

Mr. Felspar was almost at his wits' end with confusion. He had quite forgotten that he had himself placed the sketch among his landscapes in order to conceal it from Vernon's eyes, and his own amazement at beholding it there was hardly less than that of the other two. "I am afraid I must plead guilty," he said, "to having portrayed Miss Josceline from memory. It is a habit I have when any face strikes me—when, in fact, I see any new face. I have got Miss Jennynge somewhere, and Davey Aird. They are little better than caricatures."

"Nay; this is very good," said Mr. Josceline, frankly, "and very like."

"The association may give it a fictitious value in your eyes, Mr. Josceline," said Felspar, modestly; "in which case I hope you will do me the favour to accept it."

Mr. Josceline expressed himself in proper terms of gratitude and appreciation. They were in some degree genuine, for the sketch of his daughter pleased him much; but, as his habit was, he greatly exaggerated his sense of the value of the gift—and yet, if he had used much stronger and more fervent expressions, they would have been inadequate to suggest what it cost the giver.

CHAPTER XVI.

ELLA IS GIVEN HER 'CHANCE.'

It was most creditable to Felspar's powers of self-control that, after the first moment of astonishment at the sight of Ella's portrait in his portfolio, he had contrived to put on the whole affair the most matter-of-fact and commonplace construction. It is probable that the keen intelligence of Mr. Josceline would have had its suspicions had they not already been excited in another quarter; but, as matters were, the painter's explanation of the matter seemed quite sufficient to him. He understood, indeed, that Felspar admired his daughter; that he had been so struck with her appearance, in fact, that he had made for himself a lasting record of it; but this was only, as he imagined, in a professional way. Upon the whole he was rather flattered and pleased by the circumstance than otherwise.

Ella understood, of course—what woman would not?—that a very pretty compliment had been paid to her, and that was all. It was not the same sort of compliment which she had paid to Vernon in portraying the "Organ Boy," though thereby she had only intended to express an interest in the subject which might be supposed to be occupying his attention, and which had by chance attracted her own. She felt grateful to Mr. Felspar for having taken so much trouble about her, though, as he protested, it had been but a few minutes' work, and especially for having pleased her father by making him a present of the sketch; but, as her feelings went no further, she in no way shared his embarrassment.

As for Vernon, he was not even aware of what was taking place; and even if he had been, it is probable that the discovery of Ella's portrait in his friend's portfolio would not just then have had any especial significance for him. The fact was he was thinking of her solely in reference to himself. To him it seemed that her selection of his "Organ Boy" as a subject for her pencil was not only the most gracious compliment that had ever been conferred upon him, but—for one treacherous moment—something more. Was it not possible that the interest excited by the subject of his poem might have extended to the author himself? If so—well, if so, it would be a great misfortune for herself, and he had

involuntarily become the cause of her unhappiness. For although it might have struck any one who had heard him speak, as he had spoken to Felspar, of his conviction of the hopelessness of his passion for Miss Josceline, that he did "protest too much," his protestations had been perfectly genuine. For a young man, Vernon was exceptionally gifted with common sense; he did not agree with the general opinions of mankind, but he understood them, and appreciated their force. He kept his imagination for his stories and his poems, and to matters of real life applied a very practical judgment. His sense of humour—a very great safety valve for our enthusiasms—enabled him to see what was ridiculous, even in his own aspirations. But for one moment, as I have said, when Mr. Josceline had mentioned what Ella's pencil had been engaged upon, Vernon had allowed himself to be carried away by a feeling of rapturous exaltation.

He recovered himself almost immediately; and, even while Felspar was untying his portfolio, had begun to open the letter which had arrived for him, though with his mind scarcely fitted for business affairs. The note was from the editor of the *Keepsake*, and ran as follows:—

"Dear V.,—I hope you have not drawn largely upon the founts of inspiration as regards the 'Organ Grinder.' The wife of the artist who had the picture in hand writes to say that 'the pressure of mental work' has been for the present too much for her husband—a euphemism, very likely, for the premonitory symptoms of *delirium tremens*, for I know he is fond of the sparkling bowl; but at all events there is no chance of the drawing being ready for our next number unless your friend Felspar could be induced to help us."

Now Felspar, for certain technical reasons which are neither here nor there—or at all events have no business here—had set his face, as Vernon was well aware, against illustrating for the magazines; but since Miss Josceline, it seemed, had drawn the required illustration, why should not *that* fill up the vacancy on the poetic page of the *Keepsake*? I am sorry to say that for once, though Vernon was always loyal to his employers, the reflection that the picture might not be good enough for the place did not enter into his mind. There was only room there for the ecstatic idea of his own lines to the young Italian exile being illustrated by his divinity. There seemed an appropriateness in this connection such as not the most enthusiastic eulogiser of the fitness of things had ever conceived. If he had a doubt about the merits of the two productions it was of the poem; not, indeed, as to whether it was up to the standard of the *Keepsake* (which, to say the truth, was not greatly above the average of human genius), but whether it was worthy of association with Ella's handiwork. Every poet thinks that his last lines are the best he has ever written; but Vernon would, if he could, have had all the genius that belonged to him, or which ever should belong to him, compressed into those three verses, for Ella's sake.

He did not indulge in the frantic despair expressed by the lover in "Locksley Hall" that they should perish "rolled in one another's arms,

and silent in a last embrace;" he only wished to be bound in the same volume with her—her picture face to face with his poem—and then if the magazine were to stop and never to come out again, he felt as if he could have borne it.

He heard Felspar explaining where this and that sketch in his portfolio had been taken from, how far the place might be from Wallington by land or sea, and the beauties of it when you got there. He heard the visitors praise the pictures, Mr. Josceline lamenting in his most dulcet tones that such treasures of art should be buried in a portfolio and not exhibited in public for the delectation of the human race; and Ella expressing her despair of ever doing anything to equal them if she should live to be a hundred; but not a word was spoken about Ella's own little drawing, which for him had a greater interest than all the landscapes in the world, whether in nature, oils, or water-colours.

"I see all these are landscapes," observed Mr. Josceline, who had that modified form of appreciation of art called taste, and had taken a genuine interest in the sketches (which were, in fact, water-colour drawings). "Do you do nothing in the way of figures?"

"A little," said Felspar, smiling.

"Oh, papa, you have surely heard of Mr. Felspar's portraits!" murmured Ella.

"I have lived abroad for many years," explained Mr. Josceline, without turning a hair in the way of embarrassment. "One of the misfortunes of that mode of life is that it leaves one in ignorance of all that goes on in the world of literature and art. That Mr. Felspar can take a likeness when he pleases we have had a most gratifying proof, and if he portrays persons generally as well as he does places (as I do not doubt) there must be another treat in store for us."

"Oh, pray do not let us see any of your figure-drawings to-day, Mr. Felspar!" pleaded Ella. "As papa has brought my own poor little sketch here, I cannot risk any comparisons; and I know you will tell me what is wrong with it—or rather, whether it is all wrong."

"Your sketch has been infamously neglected, Miss Josceline," said Felspar, smiling, "but it was really not my fault; you will bear me witness, Vernon, that commands were laid upon me which compelled this egotistic exhibition."

"I did not hear them," said Vernon, drily, "and can therefore give no evidence except to character. I can only say that I have always noticed in professionals a very marked jealousy of amateurs."

"And in cases where work is so good as this it is not only natural but excusable," said Felspar, gallantly.

He had taken the drawing in his hand, and was holding it out at arm's length, so that all the others could see it.

"There is a great deal of expression in this, Miss Josceline, and still more of suggestion. The figure, however, is here a little out of drawing."

"Well, upon my word!" exclaimed Vernon, indignantly.

"Mr. Felspar is quite right," said Ella; "I can see it myself. The poor boy's arm is broken."

"Do not let us say broken," said Felspar, soothingly. "It is not what Doctor Cooper calls a 'compound comminuted fracture,' at all events; there, you see, a stroke of the pencil has cured him. One of his legs, too, is a little queer."

"I should say both his legs," said Mr. Josceline, uncompromisingly; "one is certainly shorter than the other."

"Nay, it looks to me only foreshortened," said Vernon; "just, in fact, as it ought to be."

"Then the hills," continued Felspar, critically, "are lumpy."

"You wouldn't have them flat, would you?" inquired Vernon.

"I quite see what Mr. Felspar means," said Ella, humbly. "If it was not for his good-nature, he would tell me the whole truth."

"I will, if you really wish it," said Felspar, gravely.

"Quite right," assented Mr. Josceline; "it is much better, my dear Ella, that you should not flatter yourself with illusions about your own proficiency. It is a sort of thing in which it takes a lifetime to attain any sort of excellence. *Ars longa, vita brevis.*"

"Which, being translated," muttered Vernon, "means that, so far as Art is concerned, Life is too short for the rubbish that is talked about it."

"Well, the fact is, so far as my judgment is worth anything," pronounced Felspar, seriously, "this little drawing of yours, Miss Josceline, is full of merit; if you have really never had a master, I will add, of genius."

"And Felspar is a man who knows," put in Vernon, quickly.

"Yes, yes; but we must not misunderstand him," observed Mr. Josceline, who, though secretly pleased with this praise of his daughter's talents, was nervously apprehensive that it might strengthen her in those ideas of taking the matter *au sérieux* of supporting herself by her own exertions which he had his own reasons for discouraging. "We must remember that Mr. Felspar is giving judgment—and a very good-natured one—upon the picture as an amateur production, and that he does not for a moment bring it into comparison (indeed, as you have heard, my daughter has the sense to perceive that for herself) with the work of a professional."

"It is quite true I made no comparison of that sort, Mr. Josceline," said Felspar, gravely; "but, carefully guarding myself from the language of exaggeration, I have seen many worse drawings than your daughter's in public exhibitions; nor do I doubt for an instant that this would find its place and fetch its price with those, for example, of our magazines which publish woodcuts."

"With all deference, I should very much doubt that," observed Mr. Josceline, hurriedly; "though, as there is no chance of the matter in question being brought to proof, we may each retain our respective opinions."

"As it happens," observed Vernon, with quiet distinctness, "there is

a chance, and indeed a most excellent opportunity, of bringing the thing to a test at once;" and he placed his letter from the editor of the *Mayfair Keepsake* in Mr. Josceline's hand.

"Dear me!" said that gentleman, perusing it aloud, and frowning a good deal more than was necessary to maintain the equilibrium of his double glasses upon his nose, "the coincidence is certainly remarkable—very remarkable;" indeed, for one instant it was plain that a suspicion of the whole affair being what the police call a "plant" was passing through his mind. "Still, although I perceive the chance it offers of my daughter's drawing taking the place of that of the gentleman who has succumbed to *delirium tremens*—which would, of course, be a great compliment to her—it does not appear a certainty; and, granting that she would fully appreciate the honour of contributing to the columns of the *Keepsake*, I think it would distress her in a proportionate degree to be rejected. I should be very unwilling, very, to expose her to the risk of such a humiliation."

"Oh, papa, do let me try, just once!" exclaimed Ella, appealingly. "It will be no humiliation to me to fail, but only a very proper reproof to my presumption. And if I were to succeed, oh, dear papa, you don't know what an extreme pleasure it would be to me!"

"What an extraordinary thing!" remonstrated Mr. Josceline. "An extreme pleasure to see your drawing in the columns of this twopenny-halfpenny magazine!"

"It's a sixpenny one," observed Vernon, with some dignity; for he did not like to hear one of the few periodicals in which he found acceptance so materially depreciated.

"What *does* it signify," exclaimed Mr. Josceline, allowing himself for an instant to show his irritation, "if it were half-a-crown? I say, what pleasure, my dear Ella, can you possibly find in seeing your pretty little drawing spoilt by a clumsy woodcutter"—in his hurry he said woodpecker, which made him still more angry—"for that, I believe, is what usually happens."

Ella said nothing; the transparent pretence of his being interested in the well-being of her drawing did not impose upon her for an instant, but she felt it was her duty to submit.

Vernon was too indignant to trust himself to speak: he felt as much disgusted with Mr. Josceline as though he had been one of those selfish possessors of gems of art who will not allow them to be engraved for the benefit of mankind; but it was not on public grounds that he was so; it seemed to him a most infamous cruelty that any one should oppose Ella's wishes.

"I don't think, Mr. Josceline," said Felspar, smiling, "if you will pardon me for saying it, that you quite understand your daughter's feelings in this little matter; the getting one's drawing published is to the young artist what getting into print is to the author. Have you never longed, as a young man, to get into print?"

"No, sir; I never was"—he was about to say—"such a fool;" but he stopped himself adroitly, as a skater on the brink of an icehole, who, instead of progressing into the abyss, indulges in a flourish; "that is, I mean the enthusiasm of youth in my case never took that particular direction."

"Then you must permit me to say," said Felspar, earnestly, "that in this particular case you can be no judge. Miss Josceline will of course bow to her father's decision; but, if I know human nature, she will be unable to divest herself of the sense of a lost opportunity. She will probably exaggerate to herself the importance of it, and the very disappointment may even beget a false confidence in her own talents: "But for papa," she will say, "I might have done wonders." Whereas, if you allowed her—"just once," as she puts it—"to try her wings, she would take a more moderate view of her merits. If the drawing was rejected, for example, as you fear will be the case, it would be a severe, but on the whole, perhaps, not an unwholesome lesson."

Ella little thought what a sharp sweet sense of pain was inflicted by the look of gratitude she here cast upon Michael Felspar. If he had earned it for himself it would have been an unalloyed delight; but his contention—though it seemed to be for her sake alone—was for another.

"Of course you ought to know best, Mr. Felspar," said Mr. Josceline, with gentle gravity. There was no longer opposition in his tone; an idea had occurred to him which had put an entirely different aspect on the case. "I will not pit my prejudices against your experience. Let my daughter's drawing take its chance with the Jupiter of the *Mayfair Keepsake*."

"Oh, that is kind of you, dear papa," cried Ella, rapturously; and, indeed, perhaps in all her life she had never been so grateful to the author of her being. If it had not been for the presence of the two young men, she would have embraced him; but, most fortunately for both of them, she abstained from that tantalising performance.

"Only if the venture does not succeed, Ella," continued Mr. Josceline, gravely, "I do hope there will be no more attempts at rivalry with the gentleman whom his wife describes as having overworked his brain. You have promised that it shall be only 'just this once,' remember."

Ella's countenance fell, or rather the bright light died out of it for an instant, and then rayed forth again.

"Indeed, papa, I shall be quite satisfied with the editor's verdict," she answered, earnestly; "and, if you wish it, will consider it as final."

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed Vernon, involuntarily, "I had six-and-twenty contributions rejected in my first year."

"My friend is very frank," observed Felspar, smiling. "It is not the way of young gentlemen of letters to speak of their little disappointments so naively."

"It does him great credit, I'm sure," remarked Mr. Josceline, in a tone, however, in which approbation was much tempered by sarcasm.

"The interesting fact he has communicated, however it may detract from his literary merits, speaks volumes for his perseverance."

"Vernon has forgotten to add," rejoined Felspar, "that many of those articles have since been accepted."

"Not one half of them," observed Vernon, grimly; "you see before you a literary genius who has been even less appreciated than—in the dramatic line—was Miss Snevellicci's papa."

"It does not seem to have affected your spirits, Mr. Vernon," said Mr. Josceline, good-naturedly. "And now that we have also satisfied ourselves as to the state of your health, it is time we took our leave. My daughter was saying, Mr. Felspar, that you had been kind enough to promise to lend her some figure-drawings for her instruction. If you are dining at the hotel this afternoon, and would bring them up yourself and take a cup of coffee with us after dinner, it would give us great pleasure. I should have included Mr. Vernon in the invitation, but that I am sure he ought to stay at home and nurse."

It was with difficulty that Vernon restrained himself from asserting that nothing was wanted to complete his convalescence except a cup of coffee; but his determination not to make a fool of himself came opportunely to his aid. Felspar, on the other hand, felt the danger that would accrue to his self-sacrificing resolutions from the acceptance of such a proposal.

"I must, I fear, decline your kind invitation," he said; "for the fact is that we have promised Mrs. Gammer to dine at home, and to change her arrangements after they have once been made is more than her lodgers dare to venture upon; besides," he added, dropping his voice, and with a smile that was full of kindness for his friend and something more—a sort of tacit assertion of the other's worthiness—"I should hardly like to leave our invalid here all alone. On the other hand, if you are returning to the hotel, as I conclude, to luncheon, I will accompany you with great pleasure, and take the drawings with me."

"I hardly like to trouble you so far," said Mr. Josceline, in the most apologetic of tones; but in his secret heart he had a reason for liking it very much, and indeed for greatly preferring that arrangement to his original proposal.

CHAPTER XVII.

MR. JOSCELINE BECOMES CONFIDENTIAL.

It was curious, considering that the visit to Clover Cottage had been paid ostensibly to Vernon, how little had been said to him, and how small a part he had himself played during the interview; but, nevertheless, he had been the chief object of interest to all concerned, though to each in a different way. It was not his presence, however, which had forbidden them to manifest this feeling; for even when the three had left him and were on their way to the hotel they made no allusion to him, such as folks are wont to make when they have just left the

society of one in whom they have a common interest. Mr. Josceline had merely observed indifferently, "I think we may feel quite comfortable as to our young friend's getting out of the wood," with reference to the snake-bite, and also by way of hint that there would be no necessity for making further "kind inquiries," and Mr. Felspar had answered, "I think so indeed;" which closed the subject. The conversation turned upon the beauties of the neighbourhood, and Ella expressed her desire to make an expedition some day to the Griffin's Head—not a public-house, but a promontory—the picture of which, among Mr. Felspar's fine collection, had struck her fancy most. He accompanied them to the hotel, where he left the drawings for Ella, and then took leave of them both; but when not a hundred yards on his way back he heard his name called out, and, turning round, beheld Mr. Josceline coming after him. He stopped at once, which was fortunate, for that gentleman had become slow of movement from other causes than that of age, and in the present case a certain agitation of mind made him still more scant of breath than usual. Felspar noticed with surprise that he wore a grave and serious air which contrasted strangely with his accustomed tone of courteous frivolity.

"If you can give me five minutes' private conversation, Mr. Felspar," he said, "and will accommodate a gentleman who is not so young as he was, by sitting down on yonder bench, you will much oblige me." The hotel grounds were not only what its advertisements had described, when they were on sale, as "happily situated," but were dotted about by innumerable benches and garden seats, placed in the most advantageous positions; some in the more retired spots, with a possible eye to the interchange of the feelings of the heart, and others to satisfy (so far as an extensive view could do it) the exactions of the soul. The one to which Mr. Josceline referred combined in some degree both these qualities. It crowned the summit of an elevation which afforded a fine prospect, and yet stood by itself apart from the carriage drive, on a little path that led nowhere else, under the shade of a noble tree.

In after years the scene often recurred to Felspar. The distant bay, the still more distant ships, the green hills sleeping in the sunshine, and the persuasive accents of an old world-wearied man speaking of one most dear to him, and whom he was about to leave for ever, in words that touched his heart like music, albeit with a false note that ran through all. "Mr. Felspar," he began, after a little pause, "it is possible that I may be making a great mistake in the confidence I am about to repose in you; but I have been accustomed to study mankind, and believe I am speaking to a gentleman and a man of honour."

"If I am not mistaken in myself, Mr. Josceline," answered Felspar, quietly, "I believe I would do nothing dishonourable."

"And be sure I would not ask you to do so," was the other's prompt and unexpected rejoinder; and again there was a pause. "The subject on which I desire to speak," he resumed, "is a delicate one, and the

difficulty is greater because I am addressing a comparative stranger. It will be better, therefore, in the first place, to speak of the facts we know, or at least which *you* know. May I ask, Mr. Felspar, from what cause, or at whose instigation, my daughter was induced to draw that picture of the 'Organ Boy?' The subject was not selected by chance," he added confidently, and with a quick glance of suspicion at his companion; "of that I am certain."

"It arose, Mr. Josceline, I have no doubt, in the conversation, yesterday, among the young people——"

"You mean Mr. Vernon, yourself, my daughter, and Miss Jennynge?" put in the other.

"Well; I do not class myself among the young people," said Felspar, smiling. "I am not old, of course, but I am much older than they; and there are circumstances—I have had, that is, more experience of life than most men of my years, and it has aged me."

"You are a man of mature thought and fixed principles," assented Mr. Josceline, gravely; "I have found out that for myself, or I should not now be addressing you. These young people, then, were talking about a subject for a picture?"

"They were talking about a picture which had been indicated to Vernon by his editor as the subject of a poem. I read the verses in question yesterday."

"Written to order?" observed Mr. Josceline, with an elevation of his delicate eyebrows.

"Yes; and, considering the circumstances, they do him great credit."

"Possibly. Their appearance in print will no doubt also do him great credit. But we are not similarly situated, Mr. Felspar. What would be a credit to some people would be a discredit—or let me rather say, a serious disadvantage—to others."

"I cannot pretend to be ignorant of the case to which you allude," said Felspar, gently, "and I must be allowed to say that I do not agree with you. What can there be disadvantageous—or, as I suppose you would put it, derogatory—in a young lady of whatever rank occupying herself with her pencil and obtaining praise for it—even public praise?"

"And payment?" inquired Mr. Josceline.

"Yes, in my opinion, and even payment. The artist, like any other labourer, is worthy of his hire."

"Well; we will not discuss that question, Mr. Felspar. You are wide of the mark in supposing that I think the exercise of her artistic skill (if she possesses any) to be derogatory to my daughter's position; I will not even say it is unsuitable to it; but it is disadvantageous. Of that—at some pain to myself—I am about to convince you. It is probable that you have no very high opinion of birth and blood."

Felspar moved his hand, and smiled.

"Just so; you would say, 'You never said so;' in my presence you have too much delicacy of mind to express such views; but I am a pretty

close observer of mankind, and I know I am right in my supposition : I have not the least desire to argue the matter ; frankly indeed, though I may seem committed to the other view of the matter, we are, as it happens, agreed upon the point. We must, however, take the world as we find it. One of the many weaknesses of the aristocratic class is to despise work ; to look down upon those who, either from necessity or independence of spirit, make their own living in the world, or even attempt to do so. I have no hesitation in saying that amongst the young men of that class it would be considered what they call 'bad form' in my daughter Ella if she were known to be a contributor—for pay—to the columns of a magazine."

"I can only say," replied Felspar, grimly, "that although you have guessed rightly as to my social views—which, indeed, are somewhat democratic—I should have hesitated to express such an opinion of our gilt youth ; if you are right, they have much less sense than even I have given them credit for."

"Whether your deduction is correct or not, Mr. Felspar, of the fact I am quite certain. Now, to be plain with you, my daughter will not be an heiress, or anything like it. I am a poor man."

Felspar murmured a sympathising "Indeed !" but, though he would have been ashamed to own it, the intelligence, while it surprised, did not displease him.

"Now my daughter is designed," continued Mr. Josceline, "not only by me, but by nature, to marry in her own rank of life. Her education has fitted her for it, her tastes are in accordance with it ; and it is to a good marriage—I am very frank with you, you may say, but the more frank I am with you, remember, the higher compliment I pay you—I say it is to a good marriage that my daughter must trust for her future maintenance and happiness."

"Happiness ?" repeated Felspar, gently. "A father of course should be the best judge of his daughter's character ; but is a good marriage, as you term it, necessarily a happy marriage ?"

"Not necessarily ; no ; but it at least presents more chance of happiness than a bad one. If my daughter married beneath her—I mean nothing offensive, believe me," added Mr. Josceline, earnestly, "I merely allude to the difference of various modes of life ; she has been brought up tenderly, and is quite unfit to rough it—if she married a poor man, I repeat, though he had the virtues of an Aristides, she would be miserable. I think I may be allowed to be a judge of this matter ; but, whether or not, I intend that she shall run no risk of so marrying. Hence it is my desire to remove every obstacle that may interfere with her due establishment in life, and in my opinion—indeed, I am sure of it—this proposed connection of hers with paper and print would be an obstacle."

Felspar bowed his head ; his views upon that matter, it was evident, were not to be asked. Mr. Josceline waited in hopes, perhaps, that assistance should be volunteered, but he waited in vain.

"You may naturally say to yourself, Mr. Felspar, 'What is all this to me? Why, after a few hours' acquaintanceship, does this garrulous old gentleman make me a confidant in his affairs in this entirely unsolicited manner? What do I care for him, or his daughter either?' Nay, permit me to finish"—for Felspar had been about to speak—"I said you might naturally have so expressed yourself, whereas I ought to have said you might have good reason for doing so. 'Naturally,' you never would. It is because your nature is, I am sure, a gentle and generous one, that I ventured to make this appeal to you. You have evidently great influence with your young friend, Mr. Vernon, and if you could convey to him, less directly than I have done, my views in this matter——"

Mr. Josceline paused by design; he saw that this reference to Vernon affected his young companion more nearly than anything he had yet said; and perhaps he looked for some revelation; if so, he was doomed to be disappointed.

"But what has my friend to do with this affair, Mr. Josceline?" inquired Felspar, drily. "He is not the editor of the *Keepsake*. He can neither accept nor reject your daughter's drawing. He has no more connection with it than he would have had with the drawing of the other artist if indisposition had not prevented him from executing it."

"That may be, Mr. Felspar, and the fact may be well understood by artists and authors. But if a picture drawn by my daughter is put in a magazine in illustration of certain verses written by Mr. Vernon, or *vice versa*, some connection will, by the outside world at least, without doubt be taken for granted between artist and poet. I was in hopes that you would perceive this for yourself without my being compelled to make allusion to a circumstance so every way embarrassing; but it will be sufficient for my purpose I am sure that you perceive it now."

It was Mr. Felspar's turn to be embarrassed here; for, as a matter of fact, he had from the first foreseen, not indeed that others would have drawn any deduction from the contiguity of poem and picture, but that the fact of the two young people thus working together would induce companionship and friendship between them. Of Mr. Josceline's pecuniary position he had of course been ignorant, though he probably took for granted that gentleman's views on matrimony; but he had not deemed the disparity of fortune so insurmountable to his friend's hopes as Vernon himself felt it to be; while the chivalry of his own disposition compelled him to encourage them. In his heart he thought Ella Josceline the most glorious young creature that his eyes had ever beheld; but he had not confessed it, even to himself, and would have been slow indeed to confess it, as Vernon had done, to another. Having once been the recipient of his friend's confidence, it seemed to him that he was bound in honour to respect it even as regarded his own secret aspirations. He felt like a priest who under the seal of confession has been put in possession unawares of some design antagonistic to his own dearest interests, but which his sacred calling forbids him to oppose.

"I again repeat," continued Mr. Josceline, finding that his companion made no reply, "that no such association as I speak of in connection with the publication of my daughter's drawing may suggest itself to you. I am speaking of a class who have neither your depth, nor catholicity of thought, and whose minds are naturally inclined to personal gossip. I may claim to know them better than you do, and you must please to take the fact for granted. What I wish you to understand is, that it would not only be painful to myself but most detrimental to my daughter's prospects in life, should her name in any way be mixed up with that of this young Bohemian."

Felspar's nature was a singularly just and fair one. He had not only the faculty of placing himself in the position of others—even of his opponents—but it would sometimes assert itself in spite of his efforts to hold his own views, and it did so now. He did not agree with Mr. Josceline; he thought his sentiments artificial and his principles unsound; but he was not sure, had their places been reversed, that he would not have exhibited the same prejudices, or even been moved by the same considerations. He felt, too, that he had no shadow of right to argue with this gentleman concerning the future of his daughter. He could, in fact, hardly advocate Vernon's cause against such an objector, but his loyalty to his friend compelled him to defend his character.

"Indeed, Mr. Josceline, you are mistaken in Vernon, if, as I gather, you apply the term 'Bohemian' to him in a depreciatory sense. That he is almost entirely dependent upon his pen is true; but he has none of the faults and follies which are popularly ascribed to the literary calling. He is not reckless or extravagant, he is a man of high principle and exceptionally delicate feeling; generous and capable of self-sacrifice (as I happen to know) to an extent very rare in any of our sex, and rarest in a man so young. You pique yourself on your knowledge of your fellow creatures; but if you have read Walter Vernon's character otherwise than I have described it, you are in error."

To all this Mr. Josceline listened with patient and even rapt attention, and it was with a certain gentle earnestness that he replied, "I have not a word to say against your young friend, Mr. Felspar. He may possess all the virtues you ascribe to him; but that one admission of yours, 'he is almost entirely dependent on his pen,' states the whole case for me in a nutshell. Even if he were a man of genius, which you must forgive me for saying he is not, though he may be a very clever young fellow, my objections to him as a suitor for my daughter's hand—I am obliged, at some risk of appearing ridiculous, to take the worst for granted—would be insuperable, and any general impression that he aspired to such a position would, as regards her prospects, be almost as bad. I should leave Wallington Bay to-morrow, at whatever personal inconvenience, if I thought such a misfortune within the range of possibility."

The idea of Mr. Josceline and his daughter departing from Walling-

ton Bay was very painful to Mr. Felspar. He would rather have packed up his traps and taken Vernon with him (as he could have done by dropping a hint of the real state of the case) than have driven them to such an extremity. And, whether right or wrong, it was evident that his companion was in earnest and meant what he said.

"And what is it," he inquired, gently, "you would have me do, Mr. Josceline?"

"The favour I have to ask of you is this, Mr. Felspar. I wish you to take such measures as may preclude the possibility of my daughter's drawing appearing in the *Mayfair Keepsake*. A depreciatory word from you——"

"I would not speak it for a thousand pounds," interrupted Felspar; "I hope I respect my own art too much to dream of such a baseness."

"A baseness, Mr. Felspar?" echoed his companion with a tinge of colour in his pale face. "I am not accustomed to suggest to my friends that they should perform base actions, even to do myself a service."

"Of course not; it is only that you and I look upon this proposition with different eyes. Suppose you were a clergyman——"

"It is not necessary," observed Mr. Josceline, rising, and speaking with great haughtiness, "to argue the matter, Mr. Felspar. I have, I see, made a mistake in my judgment of your character, and I apologise for it."

"Indeed, sir, I hope you have made no mistake in that," returned Felspar in earnest conciliation, "but only in the view taken by an artist of his professional duty. I will tell you frankly that entertaining a strong interest—natural, I hope, in one of my calling—in your daughter's drawing, it had been my intention to give it the benefit of my own experience. I should have touched it here and there so as to remove certain imperfections, and in such a manner, in short, as would probably have ensured its acceptance. But now that I have heard her father's views upon the matter, it will go to the magazine as it is, and stand or fall by its own merits. I promise this upon my honour, but more than this my honour forbids me to promise."

"Mr. Felspar," said Mr. Josceline, holding out his hand, "I thank you, and for two things. First, for having granted my request so far as your conscience permits you to do; and, secondly, for a lesson in good feeling. You are quite right, and I have been quite wrong. I feel that it is superfluous to ask a man like you to treat what I have said to you in the strictest confidence, but for my daughter's sake I do ask it."

"Indeed, sir, it shall never pass my lips," said his companion, earnestly.

"Once more, Mr. Felspar, thank you."

They shook hands warmly, and parted; Mr. Josceline making his way up hill with scarcely slower steps than Felspar descended into the village. His mind was full of thought, partly, and after a while wholly, upon his friend's account; but partly, and for the moment, his thoughts

wandered unbidden to himself and Ella. If her material expectations were indeed so small, his own were comparatively great: if, as we have said, he chose to confine himself to the more lucrative branch of his profession, he might have made a large income, and the prospect of such a prize as Ella would, he felt, have been temptation enough to have persuaded him to such a course. At all events, even to Mr. Josceline's eyes, his prospects would not have appeared so insignificant—certainly not so utterly hopeless—as those of Vernon; indeed it was plain that he had made a very favourable impression on Mr. Josceline, and one which, skilfully pushed, might possibly have made him think seriously of him as a son-in-law. It was curious that the feelings of Ella herself did not enter into these reflections of Felspar; but the fact was they were excluded partly by his own humility, partly by reverence for herself, and partly by the conviction that Vernon had already made an impression on them. As a rule, young men do not think themselves old so often as old men think themselves young, but such a thing does sometimes happen; the pursuits and amusements of the young no longer interested Felspar, though, like a veritable old man, he took pleasure in seeing them happy in their own way: his tone of thought was eminently mature, and, in comparison with Vernon for example, it seemed to Felspar that he was a sort of Patriarch. Ella was bright and cheery as Vernon himself was, and “let like mate with like” was, ere he reached the village, the sole sentiment in Felspar's mind, though, if he had expressed it, it would not have been without a sigh.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A DOUBLE GAME.

It is the custom of the clergy to divide their congregations into the Evil and the Good, which is very convenient, and simplifies a somewhat abstruse matter exceedingly; but, unhappily, the Good—that is, the folks without evil in them (except that little modicum of original sin, which, in view of the immense amount of peccadilloes imported by mankind since that first cargo, may be disregarded)—are so very few that it is hardly worth while to address them from the pulpit at all, and more especially as they stand in no need of exhortation. In the case of the vast majority even of church-goers, if the evil in them were represented by a black framework, as in a mourning envelope, we should see them, I am afraid, with a pretty broad border; only you and I, and half a dozen others of this congregation, perhaps, would be represented by what stationers call the “mitigated grief size”—perhaps a quarter of an inch. I suspect some people would exhibit scarcely enough of white envelope to write their direction upon. To this last class the moralist, if not the divine, would undoubtedly have relegated the Hon. George Emilius Josceline, and especially if he could have looked into his mind after that

morning's interview with Mr. Felspar, which had seemed to touch him to the very core, whereas what was uppermost in his thoughts, as he toiled up the hill towards his hotel, was the reflection that he had gained his end, and, to a certain extent, even outwitted his late companion. The artist had given his word not to put any finishing touches to Ella's drawing; "and without them," reflected this unnatural father, "I should think even this twopenny-halfpenny magazine will never admit it into its columns."

It is a sad thing to have to record of any parent that he should actually wish his daughter's mental gifts to escape recognition; but Mr. Josceline's case was not an unparalleled one. Poverty, like a distorting mirror, often makes what is fair seem foul to us. How often, for example, has the poor man cause to curse his daughter's beauty! But what made Mr. Josceline's case a bad one, rather than a hard one, was that his poverty had been brought about by his own hands, which had squandered his means in all sorts of unworthy ways. Truth to say, for all that was white on his envelope he was indebted to his daughter; that is to say, his love for her had cleared a space for itself, as it were, in the midst of his selfish recklessness, as though a dove should nestle on a rubbish heap. And, what was worst of all, though to him it did not appear so, the very plans he had in his mind for her benefit were themselves far from what they should be; he was fixed on making her comfortable after his own ideas, no matter at what risk of soiling her white wings.

It may be thought that Mr. Josceline ran a great danger in reposing his confidence in a comparative stranger like Mr. Felspar; but the danger was greater than it looked. Short as his acquaintance had been with the young painter, he had gauged his character pretty accurately; and what he had heard of him—and he had made certain inquiries—had corroborated his own view. Moreover, if he were wrong; if Felspar and his friend were like most young men of their class—mere fortune hunters—the knowledge of the fact that Ella was portionless would at least put an end to all peril from that quarter, whatever mischief it might work (by the news getting abroad) in others. And, as Mr. Josceline thought, there *was* peril from that quarter. He had acknowledged to himself the attractions of Vernon (for he had been attracted, himself, towards him), and noticed the pleasure Ella derived from his society. He had thought the anxiety she had showed in connection with the adder's bite more significant even than it really was; he had been wont to see young ladies of her position take little services from young gentlemen (if they were "ineligible") very coolly, and he did not understand how gratitude affects a pure and ingenuous nature. What had, however, alarmed him more than anything was the intelligence, received from Felspar himself, that his daughter's drawing had been directly suggested to her by Vernon. He had observed the "pleased alacrity" with which she had set to work upon it the previous evening, and the diligence with which she had proceeded with it, and had wondered at the cause. And now he no longer

wondered, but feared. It was not easy to alarm a mind so well balanced—in worldly scales—as his was ; but he had become of late a prey to anxiety upon this subject, and the state of his health increased it. He had come to Wallington Bay as the place best adapted for a certain plan he had vaguely had in view, and this had already taken shape. It was of extreme importance—for his time was growing short—that nothing should interfere with it ; hence his recent measure of precaution. With Vernon brushed aside, the road, though difficult, would at least be clear before him.

On his way back to the hotel, Mr. Josceline met Mrs. and Miss Jennynge “going out for a promenade,” as the elder lady called it, in the grounds, for an appetite for their lunch ; and with much politeness he offered to accompany them.

They accepted his offer with effusion. They congratulated themselves that they had announced their intention of not going far from home, since they had now a good cause for presenting themselves to the envious eyes of the other guests of the *Ultramarine* (some of whom had already their noses flattened to the windows) in the company of “the Hon. George Emilius,” as Mrs. Armytage was wont familiarly to speak of her new acquaintance. To lookers on, the mother on one side, the daughter on the other, were apparently engaging him in earnest conversation, though the elder lady was, in fact, the chief speaker.

“How wicked you are, Mr. Josceline,” said she, “to make poor Mr. Felspar so idle ! You should not thus misuse your social attractions ; I saw you talking to him under the elm tree seat for ever so long.”

“I had no idea that your eye was upon me, Mrs. Jennynge ; but even if I had known it, my conscience would not have pricked me. If I did detain Mr. Felspar for five minutes, it was only from his luncheon.”

“He ought to have been at work upon my picture,” said Mrs. Jennynge, with a pretence at severity.

“Ah, that, indeed, would have been a pleasant occupation !” said Mr. Josceline, gaily ; then suddenly reflecting that it was not Mrs. Jennynge’s portrait, but her husband’s, on which the artist was engaged, he added, “for it is no doubt a pleasure, though a mournful one, to embalm, as it were, the memory of the dead by one’s imperishable pencil. It was upon the subject of art that we two were talking just now—or rather upon which he was talking and I was listening.”

“Oh, that was it, was it ?” said Miss Jennynge, with a significant glance at her mamma. “We could not think what it was that seemed to interest you both so much.”

Some people would have felt annoyed at being subjected to the sort of espionage to which the young lady had confessed so naively, but not so Mr. Josceline ; he was not surprised, and was far from being displeased, at it. It not only showed that his present companions took a personal interest in him, but proved that not a point would be missed in the part he was about to play.

"To you, Miss Jennynge," he replied, "who are, yourself, a devotee to art, no interest in that subject can appear exaggerated or misplaced."

"Well, I don't know about that," observed her mother, tartly; "Anastasia keeps her spirits up uncommonly well for a devotee."

The young lady looked up in some astonishment at this unexpected ebullition; but Mr. Josceline was not astonished. He perceived that the widow was jealous of the attention he was paying to Anastasia, of whom generally she stood in some fear.

"I don't think it is necessary, dear Mrs. Jennynge," he said, soothingly, "to be melancholy because we are devoted. In your case, for example—what is the matter?"

"Nothing; I fancied I heard that horrid Fido in our sitting room."

Mr. Josceline had also heard a dog bark; but he doubted that that had been the cause of Mrs. Jennynge's interruption. She wanted, as he guessed, to put a stop to any reference to her deceased husband, of whom in general she could never talk enough; this he thought—combined with her jealousy—was a most encouraging sign.

"Ah, Mr. Joscelyn!" she continued, "you gentlemen little know what we ladies suffer."

"That is your own faults," answered Mr. Josceline, gallantly. "To us you always appear so beaming that we never think of the fortitude that has enabled you to hide your sorrow." And, while he addressed his voice to Mrs. Jennynge, he suffered his eyes to rest admiringly on Anastasia.

"That is his horrid bark," cried the widow, with irritation—"I thought I could not have been mistaken. He is shut up in our room all by himself, Anastasia, and will destroy your dear father's precious portrait. I'll just run in and let him out."

"How ridiculous mamma makes herself about that picture!" exclaimed the young lady when Mr. Josceline and she were left alone.

"We must all have something to love, if it is but a memory," he returned, in a tone that was not only apologetic but even tender; and I am afraid, it must be confessed, that Mr. Josceline pressed—though almost imperceptibly—Anastasia's arm.

"Well, she has got *me*," returned the young lady with indignation.

Mr. Josceline was wondering within himself whether she was resenting that delicate pressure of the arm, or whether the movement had not been demonstrative enough to attract her attention.

"That is true, my dear young lady, and to most people it would be enough. To some people, indeed, it would be all sufficient. But your mother is peculiar."

"Very," assented Anastasia, sharply. "She is so imprudent, for one thing. The idea of her coming out on the terrace, here, at her time of life, without a shawl! She can never be persuaded that she is no longer young."

"Ah, that is what we old folks cling to—our youth," observed Mr. Josceline, gently. "To you, who are still in the enjoyment of it, and

who possess all that makes life worth having—health, beauty, and accomplishments—you cannot understand us, Miss Jennynge.”

“No, I can’t,” said Anastasia, flatly. “I think mamma ought to know better than to be affecting to be my age.”

“Which is three-and-twenty?” hazarded Mr. Josceline, though he judged her to be five years older at the very least.

“I am three-and-twenty next birthday,” replied Anastasia, without moving a muscle.

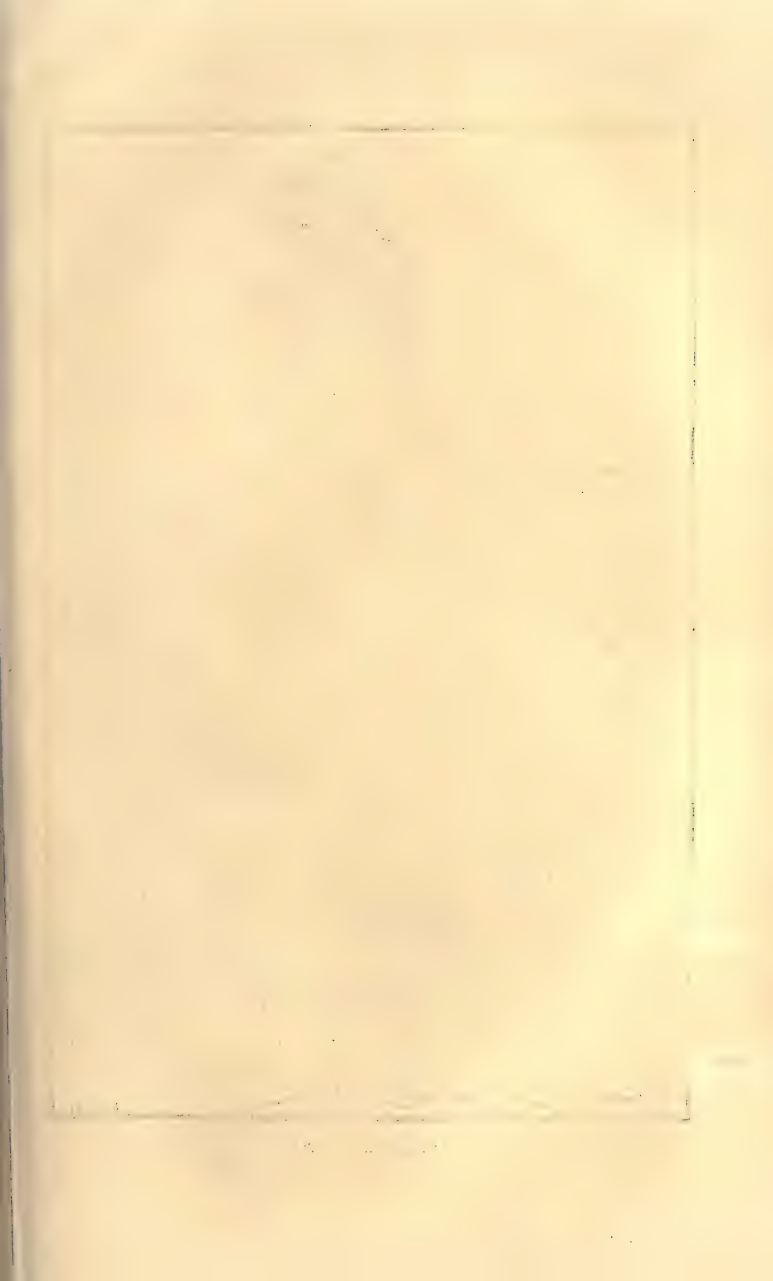
“I thought so; I am generally pretty correct in my guesses at age,” returned her companion. “I wish I were a younger man,” he added, regretfully.

“A man, I have read, is as old as he feels,” returned the young lady, much mollified; “a woman as old as she looks. Now my mother looks sixty if she looks a day—— But, there she comes;” and Mrs. Jennynge reappeared from the house, though, as it happened, only to call them in to luncheon.

Upon the whole Mr. Josceline flattered himself he had done a good stroke of business. It was true he had found Anastasia very resentful of the attentions he had been paying for the last day or two to her mother. It could not but be to her disadvantage that that lady should think of marrying again; but that she should so openly have hinted her disgust at any such idea—for that that was what she meant when she spoke of her mother’s affecting youthfulness he was certain—was very satisfactory to him; it showed that the possibility of that lady’s being married for the third time had presented itself to Anastasia, and how much more, therefore, must it have done so to the widow herself. His own little attentions to the young lady—and it must be admitted that he took some pleasure in paying them; the cajolement of young women was a habit with him, and pleased him, even though nothing came of it, just as writing a sonnet, though not designed for publication, pleases a bard—had, indeed, been somewhat icily received, though he felt that just at last there had been symptoms of a thaw; but he had had no object in them beyond throwing her off her guard, and, if possible, diverting the suspicions of other people into a wrong direction.

In this he had been successful even beyond his hopes. For Mrs. Armytage had had her eyes glued to the window-pane of her private sitting room which commanded the terrace throughout the interview. Her exclamations of contempt at Mr. Josceline’s familiarity with the widow were forcible and frequent. “How can he so demean himself? What a fool he is making of that old woman!” &c. &c.; but when Mrs. Jennynge had left him, and she observed the attentions he was paying to Anastasia, she was even still more scandalised—by Anastasia.

“What a forward minx! There is no knowing what a girl may not do with an old man if she throws herself at him like that. I think it is my bounden duty as a matron—and the only one qualified to advise that sweet young creature—to warn Miss Josceline of her father’s peril.”





"I CAN WALK NOW."

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

MAY, 1881.

A Grape from a Thorn.

By JAMES PAYN.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE LOST LOCKET.



AIRD was she did know, and it had struck her that this was the first occasion on which she had seen the little fellow out of his father's company. He had come in by himself, it seemed, and then departed almost immediately with Ella.

THOUGH the luncheon-bell had rung, Ella did not make her appearance at the *table-d'hôte* — a circumstance which would have annoyed and perhaps even alarmed her father, but for the fact that others also had failed to appear there as usual. Mr. Aird and Davey were absentees, and Mr. Josceline had been informed by Mrs. Trant that his daughter had left the hotel only a few minutes before his own return thither, accompanied by the younger gentleman. Where Mr.

"I am afraid it's an elopement," observed Mrs. Jennynge, with a little giggle, as she dissected a prawn; "you really ought to have put a stop to the flirtation between those two young people earlier, Mr. Josceline."

Mrs. Armytage had it on the tip of her tongue to say, "Don't *you* talk; you've got a daughter of your own to look after;" but she restrained herself with an effort. It made her angry, however, to remark that Mr. Josceline—who perhaps felt that he owed the widow some reparation for his recent conduct to her—laughed at this sally very much.

"It would have shown more prudence in the young lady," observed Mrs. Armytage, "if she had run away with the father instead of the son. I understand Mr. Aird is immensely rich."

The observation was intentionally a disagreeable one. Mrs. Armytage had meant to give Mr. Josceline what she called a rap on the knuckles for his encouragement of those vulgar Jennynges, but she had no idea how tender his knuckles were. She had inadvertently suggested the very thing which he had been revolving in his own mind, but which he was especially solicitous to prevent occurring to any one else. Without so much as a wince, however, he replied indifferently, "Well; I don't much believe in the great fortune of retired Indians; one hears of their having so many laks of rupees, but it often turns out that they have a lack of pounds sterling. The day for the shaking of the Pagoda tree has gone by."

"But it had not gone by when Mr. Aird first stood at the foot of it," returned Mrs. Armytage.

"After all, *what* is money?" ejaculated Mrs. Jennynge, sentimentally.

"I should like to know what some of us would be without it?" remarked her rival, contemptuously.

Poor Mrs. Jennynge felt the dart, and also her incapacity to hold her own in single combat with her enemy; she was sorry she had spoken, but she could not let the ball rest where it had been flung—that is, in her own lap. "I mean what is money, after all, without other things to enable us to enjoy it?" she stammered out. "Without health, for instance; poor Mr. Aird—and indeed little Davey also—is a case in point."

"That doesn't militate against his being a good match," insisted Mrs. Armytage; "indeed, quite the contrary."

"What sentiments!" exclaimed Anastasia.

"Yes; it's very fine," snapped Mrs. Armytage, with the quickness and fire of a lucifer match—and by no means one of those that can "only light upon its own box"—"but all of us are not all poetry and romance like you, Miss Jennynge; it's wonderful to me—though very creditable to yourself—that you should have retained your simplicity so long."

"Well," said Mrs. Wallace, gently, in the pause that followed this onslaught—which, to say truth (in conjunction with her tight lacing and the prawns), had taken all the breath out of poor Anastasia, "for my part, the longer I live the more I like simplicity."

"Ah, but you've no girls to marry!" rejoined Mrs. Armytage, tartly.

"That's true," sighed Mrs. Wallace; her thoughts at once transporting her far from the present scene to a distant grave.

"Indeed," said Mrs. Percival Lott, taking courage from the number of her allies to cast her stone at the common enemy, "I don't see why you should take such mercenary views of your own sex, Mrs. Armytage."

"Of course not, because you've caught a husband," was the swift rejoinder; "if you were upon your promotion you would probably be looking after the loaves and fishes like any other young woman."

The suspected bride turned scarlet; nor was her confusion mitigated by the circumstance that her husband, tickled, perhaps, by some reminiscences of his courting days, broke out into a little chuckle.

"Upon my word," said Mr. Josceline, smiling, "I shall rise and fly, Mrs. Armytage, for fear it may be the time for the males to come next under your castigation."

"No, no; I have not a word to say against *them*," returned the lady addressed; "they are naturally simple, and therefore one never finds them making a pretence of being so. For my part, I don't believe in a designing man."

"You are wrong, there, madam—or rather as far from right as it is possible you can be," said Mr. Josceline, politely. "Do you think the Professor, for instance, has never been designing?"

"Eh, what?" exclaimed that learned man, looking up from a brown study of the deepest tint, and seeing Mr. Josceline with his hand upon his half-pint of sherry; "no, I thank you, not at this time of day."

"Very likely," laughed Mr. Josceline, rising from his chair; "but a little earlier, perhaps, it was different."

And in the general peal of laughter evoked by the Professor's mistake Mr. Josceline escaped from the room with considerable self-congratulation. If Mrs. Armytage's suspicions were aroused in one direction respecting him, it was clear that they were cast asleep in another.

Meanwhile Ella is wandering by the sea-shore, far from the hotel (and lunch), with little Davey's hand fast clasped in hers; their eyes are fixed on the lessening sand—for the tide is rising—with eager intentness, and every piece of tangled weed and sea-worn rock is being examined by them as for lost treasure.

She had found the little fellow in tears just leaving the hotel, to which he had come back from his usual morning walk only a few minutes, and in reply to her compassionate inquiry had told her his pitiful story.

"Poor papa has met with a great misfortune, Miss Josceline," he had sobbed out.

"Good heavens! But let us send him help," cried Ella, at once imagining that he had been cut off in some bay by the sea, or had fallen over a cliff and broken his leg.

"No, no; nobody can help him; I was not to tell anybody," he said; "only I am sure he would let me tell you. *You* would not steal anything that belonged to anybody else, even if you found it, would you, Miss Josceline?"

"Indeed, I hope not, my dear. But what has your father lost? His purse?"

"Oh, no; I don't think he would care for that one half as much. It is his locket with mamma's picture in it; he used to wear it on his watch-chain, you know."

Ella remembered that he wore a locket of a heart-shape in dead gold—indeed Mrs. Armytage had once made a flippant allusion to it that Mr. Aird had resented extremely—and she said so. "Now be very careful, Davey. Where did you walk to-day? I mean, which was the exact path you took up to the moment your father missed the locket?"

"Oh, it's no use, Miss Josceline. I came back along it myself, and it was nowhere to be seen. Papa thought it just possible that he might have left it at home on his dressing-table, and sent me back to look; and if it wasn't there I was to go back to him."

"But, my dear child, you have not had your lunch, and you look fagged and tired as it is."

"Oh, but I had rather go back to papa. I *must* go!"

"Very good, then I will go with you; only you shall have a bag of biscuits to put in your pocket, to eat as you go along."

Thus provisioned, off they started, beginning to examine the ground from the first moment, and keeping as closely as Davey could recollect to the path his father had taken. The pair had ventured on a longer walk than usual, to a promontory called "The Monkshead," and about half-way thither Mr. Aird had discovered his loss.

"Did you take the cliff path, or go by the sands, Davey?"

"We took the cliff path; only once we dipped down to the sands in Abbot's Creek."

"And you came back by yourself exactly the same way?"

"No; I did not come by the Creek at all, because I wanted to be quick."

"Then, depend upon it, the locket is in the Creek, Davey."

"No; papa thought not; he fancied he had seen it after we had climbed the cliff again, and it is on the cliff that he is looking for it."

"However, he may be mistaken; and, whether he is or not, we will try the Creek, because our only chance of finding the locket there is to do so at once; the tide is coming in, and if it once flows over it, it is gone for ever; whereas on the cliff it may be found at any time, and the folks about Wallington are honest people, I think, notwithstanding your father's fears, and whoever finds it is sure to bring it to the hotel."

This argument carried conviction with it even to little Davey ; but the boy was tired and fagged, and his grief on his father's account had also helped to exhaust the little strength he had. Ella could judge of Mr. Aird's anxiety about the locket, from his having for the moment lost sight of the weakness of his child, in thus telling him to return to him after so long a walk. She would have made him sit down where he was and gone on by herself, but for the necessity of having the exact route pointed out to her which his father had taken. A sudden thought, however, struck her.

"Can you ride pick-a-back, Davey?"

"Oh, yes ; I often do upon papa's back, when I feel tired." So Ella knelt down and, though the path was steep and the day was hot, she took him on her shoulders, and there he sat, eating steadily through his bag of biscuits, and with his little legs clinging tightly round her neck, like the old man of the sea in the story of *Sindbad the Sailor*.

For some time he went on directing her footsteps in childish contentment, but presently—his last biscuit having been disposed of—he whispered in his thin treble, "Ain't 'oo tired, Miss Josceline ? I can walk now."

She was very tired, but assured him, with a kiss, that he was as light as a feather ; and so she toiled on till they reached Abbot's Creek. Here she let him down, for she could not carry him down the cliff, and on the smooth and still hard sand of the bay it was easy walking for him. They looked for what they sought in vain, until they had almost reached the place where they had to ascend again, when a bright something, looking like the sparkle of the sundew, attracted her quick eye. On the very verge of the line of the encroaching sea, and far below high-water mark, was the gold locket, sticking edgeways in the sand, where it had of course fallen without the least noise.

"Oh, how glad papa will be !" cried Davey, clapping his little hands ; "and but for you, Miss Josceline, we should never have found it."

"You dear boy !" cried she, almost as pleased as himself at her success, and touched also with the child's manner and good feeling ; "you must do one thing in return for this little service ; you must not call me Miss Josceline any more, but Ella, and you must give me a kiss."

"You dear, good Ella," he said, putting up his weary-looking but happy face to meet her embrace. "Oh, how pleased dear papa will be !"

To a kind heart there is no errand so pleasant as to carry to another some good news ; and leaving the child safely ensconced under the shade of a rock upon the beach, "to be left till called for," Ella at once proceeded to toil up the cliff in search of Mr. Aird.

If Mrs. Armytage, or even Mrs. Jennynge, had seen her at it, they would probably have expressed disapprobation ; they would have thought it perhaps "a little imprudent" in her—if they had known her circumstances they would certainly have called it "bold"—thus to seek an inter-

view with the widower alone ; whereas the motive that was actuating Ella was simply what would have urged her in the scriptural sense to visit "the widow." To think of the desolate old man wandering on the downs yonder, looking for the lost memorial of his dead wife, touched her with pity.

In a few minutes more she had caught sight of him at no great distance, coming slowly towards her, with head depressed, and suggesting, as it seemed to her, by his very gait the distress and melancholy of his mind. Presently he looked up, probably for the return of Davey, and perceived her waving her handkerchief towards him—a signal which the female oracle of the *Ultramarine* would have reprobated exceedingly ; to her it would have seemed only one step short of "throwing the handkerchief." The sign, as Ella intended it, was at once understood ; the bowed figure straightened itself, and came on towards her at greatly increased speed.

"I have found it, Mr. Aird !" she cried, as he got within hailing distance ; "your locket is quite safe."

She held the trinket out to him, and fixing his eyes on it, without even glancing at her, he took it from her hand and pressed it to his lips. "Thank Heaven," he exclaimed, fervently, "thank Heaven !" then, turning to her with a look of tender gratitude, strange to see on his lined and dusky face, he added, "And thank *you*, Miss Josceline, who are Heaven's messenger."

Extravagant as were his words, it was evident they were not spoken in the way of compliment ; the tears were in the old man's eyes as he uttered them.

CHAPTER XX.

MR. AIRD'S LOVE STORY.

So intense was Mr. Aird's emotion that Ella, unwilling to be the witness of what he might afterwards feel to be a weakness, was about to turn back and leave him ; but he stopped her with a gesture of his hand.

"Do not go, dear, good young lady ; you must not go till I have thanked you. I cannot say how much sorrow you have saved me ; my child told you what had happened, I conjecture, and having found the locket where I hoped, yet hardly dared to hope, I had left it, you came yourself to save him so long a walk."

"I wish I had, Mr. Aird," she answered, smiling ; "but the fact is the locket was not in your room, and, as Davey seemed so distressed at the loss of it, I came back with him to look for it. I wish I could have spared him the fatigue, but he was necessary as a guide, you see ; and I have left him safe enough, though very tired, poor little fellow, beside a rock in the Creek yonder."

"Then you have come all this way with him to look for this ?"

"Well, it was not so very far; but my fear was that you had dropped it on the sands, as indeed you did."

"Then but for you," said the old man with a glance over the cliff, "the tide would have covered it by this time. Did you open the locket, Miss Josceline?"

"I? Certainly not," said Ella, with a little flush.

"Then, if you don't mind sitting here for a few minutes, you shall see it now; I owe it to you, or rather to myself, in explanation of the weakness I have shown, and the exhibition of which I know you would have spared me. This is the portrait of my darling wife, and the mother of my only child."

He placed the open locket in her hand. The picture it contained was the portrait of a young woman anything but beautiful; the face, indeed, was slightly pitted with the small-pox; the blue eyes were soft and gentle, but they conveyed the idea of one who has suffered much. The expression was one of serene content, as of one who, having known what it is to live and endure, has found, deservedly, her home in heaven."

"It is a sweet-looking face indeed," said Ella.

"Yes; but not pretty. It is seldom, though I have seen it once," said the old man, softly, "that to those who have the gift of beauty, God also adds that of gentleness and goodness. When I first saw it, there was no attraction in that face for me. Her name was Edith Trenton; I went out to India with her, in the same ship, and also with her cousin, another Edith, and bearing the same surname; and that second Edith was my first love. I was a poor man then, and she was poor also; very literally her face was her fortune. The gossips on board said she had come out to India as being the best market for it. To me such talk was blasphemy, but I had no right to resent it. I felt that a union between her and me was impossible. She had been brought up in luxury, and I had nothing to offer her except my love; I therefore strove to conceal it; if I did not do so it was no fault of mine, yet I believe she guessed it. We parted at Calcutta; she and her cousin had a home there which had been offered them by her aunt, the widow of a rich civilian; and I went my way to my work, hundreds of miles up the country. I had at that time no prospects; but the chief English resident of the place where I was stationed and my immediate superior in a few months died suddenly, and, to my astonishment and delight, I was offered his post. The delight was mainly caused by the conviction that I was now in a position to declare my love for Edith. I wrote to her immediately announcing the good fortune that had happened to me, assuring her how in secret I had always worshipped her, explaining the reasons that had hitherto kept me silent, and expressing a hope, from certain signs I had construed in my favour, that she was not altogether indifferent to me. In case this was so, as I prayed it might be, I ventured to beg her to come to me, as I could not go to her, and I

enclosed an invitation from the wife of the English chaplain of my district that she should be her guest till we were married.

"In course of post I received a letter from Edith that filled my soul with joy. She acknowledged that she had always loved me, though she protested, with what I took for woman's coyness, that she had been in doubt as to whether her love was reciprocated. As she had now no doubt, and as she felt she could not do too much to promote my wishes in return for the happiness my letter had given her, she acceded to my proposal of coming up the country and taking advantage of the hospitality that had been offered her. She also candidly owned that her home in Calcutta was not a pleasant one, and that she felt no regrets at leaving it. I have got that letter now, dear to me as on the day when it promised me possession of my beautiful bride, but in the meantime I confess I have looked at it with other eyes. Edith Trenton arrived in due course; but imagine my chagrin and embarrassment on finding that it was not my Edith, but her cousin. I don't suppose that any man was ever placed in circumstances so perplexing and painful; my first duty, however, I felt, was to save an unprotected and orphan girl from the distress of mind that must ensue upon her discovery of such a mistake. Fortunately her arrival was earlier by some hours than had been expected, and the chaplain kindly rode out to me to the village where I was engaged upon my duties to inform me of it.

"How is she looking?" cried I, rapturously; "and is she not charming?"

"Yes," said he, "she is charming. She has a sweet expression."

"But is she not beautiful?" I reiterated, with a lover's pride. "I thought you admired dark beauties."

"I don't call Miss Trenton dark," said he; "and to be candid with you, my dear fellow, I think love has blinded you to her mere physical charms; she has, however, as it seems to me, the beauty of the soul, which is far better; she sent you her dear love, and, by-the-bye, she gave me this letter which she thought would give you pleasure to read as you came along."

"The letter was from *my* Edith, wishing me every happiness on my approaching union. She herself, she said, had been married some six weeks to a Captain Pipon—which, of course, was the reason why my letter had been placed in her cousin's hands, instead of her own. For the moment I was stunned, but all the time I was riding home—though my companion ascribed my taciturnity to a very different cause—I was schooling myself to adopt such a behaviour as should prevent this poor girl's eyes being opened to the real state of the case. As her cousin was another's, it did not seem to me much matter whether I was married or not; while the difference to Miss Trenton would be prodigious. I never could send her back to Calcutta, scorned and miserable, to be the object of ridicule to society, and an unwelcome burden replaced upon the shoulders of her aunt. Moreover, although

I had, as I thought, only paid her the usual attentions of a gentleman upon the voyage out, I now remembered that they had been accepted very graciously. She had doubtless taken them for more than I had intended; while I, on the other hand, had underrated her kindly feelings towards myself. I am thankful to say that from the moment when I gave her my first kiss of welcome, to that in which I pressed my lips to her dear eyes closed in death, she was never undeceived.

"You behaved well and nobly, Mr. Aird," said Ella; "and I am sure you were repaid for it."

"My dear young lady, I was repaid ten thousand fold. In a little while my wife taught me to love her for herself, and after a time to adore her. I never envied Captain Pipon his prize. Day by day, and week by week, I grew to love my Edith more and more, till Fate, jealous as it seemed that a mere mortal—and it must be owned an unworthy one—should enjoy such happiness, snatched my darling from me. Davey is all that is now left to me of her save this portrait, which your great kindness has preserved to me. I would rather have lost a limb than have been deprived of it."

To Ella, who beheld his face as it bent rapturously over his restored treasure, it was easy to believe his words.

"And did Mrs. Pipon ever know?" inquired Ella.

The old man smiled as he looked up at her.

"You are, I perceive, a daughter of Eve, after all," he said. "Yes, she did. Of that I am sure, though no one else could have been. Neither to me, nor to any other person, did she ever breathe one word of that mistake which might have been so fatal. She was not one to boast of her triumphs. I did not need to know *you*, Miss Josceline, to be assured that all women are not like those down yonder." And he pointed disdainfully in the direction of the hotel.

"Our friends at the *Ultramarine* may be better folks at heart, Mr. Aird, than you imagine," said Ella, smiling. "It is only manner——"

"You may just as well say," interrupted the old man, impatiently, "that my lined and wrinkled face is no indication of loss and trouble—not to mention of testiness of disposition, a duplicate liver, and general unsuitableness for civilised society. Your politeness will not allow that? Well, then, you may just as well say that your own sweet face is no exponent of the gentleness and goodness of the heart within. But you look pale; I fear you are tired with your long walk; you did not, I do hope, come out before you had had your lunch?"

"I don't think that two hours of abstinence will do me much harm," replied Ella, smiling. But, in fact, though hitherto excitement had supported her, she was both fatigued and faint. "Let us go down to poor Davey, who will begin to think himself deserted."

"True; the darling boy!" said the old man, tenderly. But, though he spoke of his child, there was another who now shared his anxieties.

"No you must not go down, dear young lady. That will be an

unnecessary fatigue. Walk slowly on along the cliff, and I will join you with the child. It is selfish of me to ask you to wait for us; but old Indians, as you must have heard, are always selfish, and I cannot deprive myself of the rare pleasure of your company."

Certainly if Mrs. Armytage had beheld him, as he thus addressed her young friend in the tenderest of tones, she would have ejaculated, "Well, I never!" at the very least. For her own part, Ella would have preferred to get home at once, where she knew her father would be waiting for her with some anxiety; but she could hardly refuse Mr. Aird so small a favour. She waited accordingly for him and Davey, her mind occupied with that strange story of the two Ediths, at which—though it had such strong points of humour about it—the manner of the narrator had overcome in her all temptation to smile.

Love, it seemed, then, was more Protean than she had imagined. It did not assume one shape only. It was not always necessary to fall over head and ears into it; you might gradually slip into it with the same result! How different Mr. Aird's experience had been from all she had heard and read of it! In what unlooked-for places, it seemed, was to be found Romance! The very last man in the world whom she would have credited with a love story was this man. How strange it was, too, that one so reticent should have thus made her his confidante, and that without laying any injunction of secrecy on her! Of course she would never tell it to any one who would speak of it again, but she knew her father was to be trusted; he was a man who could discourse upon an infinity of topics, and was therefore never driven to do so upon those which were inopportune or indiscreet. She thought she would tell him what she had heard, for two reasons: first, because it would lead him to think kindly of Mr. Aird, in whom she herself now felt a strong personal interest; and, secondly, because the recital might make him speak of his own past and his own love. Why was it that he never spoke of her mother about whom she longed to hear, yet did not dare to inquire? What was it that sealed his lips? She had often thought of this before with a certain feeling of discomfort and apprehension. It was a subject that attracted her, but, somehow or other, one she never dared to dwell upon. The same feeling possessed her now, and it was almost a relief to her when the thread of her thoughts was broken by the appearance of Mr. Aird and Davey.

"So," said the former, softly, as soon as he recovered breath from the ascent, "I find that, though Miss Josceline went without her luncheon to-day, she took care to provide some for her little companion."

"It was not much of a lunch," said Ella, laughing; "we had only some dry biscuits, had we, Davey?"

"I had some; I was so hungry that I eat 'em all myself," said the child, naively; "you had none, Ella."

"Ella, indeed!" exclaimed Mr. Aird. "Why don't you say 'Miss Josceline,' Master Impudence?"

"She told me to say Ella, papa; it's prettier, and I like it far better."

"Oh, it's prettier, no doubt," laughed Mr. Aird; "very pretty! But I can imagine somebody whom you and I know, Miss Josceline, observing, if she heard it, 'What a very ill-mannered, forward child!'"

The imitation of Mrs. Armytage's tone was not very accurate, but it was recognisable. Mr. Aird generally treated her in her absence with silent contempt; but he was evidently in the best of spirits, and, as it seemed to Ella, coming out in a new character in all directions.

"Well, my dear Davey," he continued, cheerfully, "you are stepping out like a little man. I should never have guessed that you had walked twice over this ground already."

"I didn't walk back, papa; I felt very tired, so Ella carried me pick-a-back almost all the way."

"Pick-a-back?" exclaimed the old gentleman in amazement. "What, did you *carry* the child? But I need not ask. I will not say you carried him on your shoulders, Miss Josceline, but between your pinions."

"For a gentleman who never pays compliments, as I have heard you say of yourself, Mr. Aird," said Ella, laughing, "that is very pretty."

"I am glad you think so," said the old man, quietly; "but it is not a compliment, my dear young lady; for that you are an angel is the simple truth—— See, there's your father on the hotel terrace with the telescope. He is sweeping the landscape for his sunbeam."

Apparently he found it; for presently they saw him coming out to meet them.

"Mr. Josceline," said Mr. Aird, gravely, as he drew near, "I owe you an apology for having deprived you so long of your daughter's society, and if I were in your place I should not easily accept it. But she has been engaged in a work of true Christian charity, I do assure you."

"If she has done you any service, Mr. Aird, I am sure I do not grudge you her company," was the gracious reply.

"She has done me a very great service, Mr. Josceline," answered the other, earnestly; "and, though it may be but an indifferent exchange for losing your good company even for an hour, she has made of the humble individual who addresses you a friend for life."

It was curious, though Mr. Aird had the same intention—namely, of conveying his gratitude—how different was his expression of it from what it had been to Ella herself; it had then been natural, it was now formal and stilted; notwithstanding which, strange to say, he conferred at least as much pleasure in the one case as he had in the other.

"One would be really almost inclined to think," was Mr. Josceline's private reflection, "that, after all, there is such a thing as a special Providence."

Except for a certain complacency, however, which he could not altogether banish from his countenance, he showed no sign of exultation at the way which Ella had evidently made in Mr. Aird's good graces. He

even affected to treat the matter with the same light-hearted indifference with which he received—or appeared to receive—all other tidings.

"Why, Ella, you little puss," he said, as soon as they were alone, and while she was partaking of the meal of which she really stood in need in their own apartment; "what spell have you been throwing round our friend, Mr. Aird, that has thus enchanted him?"

"It is only that I had the opportunity of doing him a slight service," she answered, modestly.

"It seems to have been a 'secret service,' then; for he was evidently disinclined to talk about it," replied Mr. Josceline. "Of course, if it is anything very delicate and confidential," he added, airily, "I must not be too curious."

"Well, it *was* something delicate, or, rather, which had reference to a delicate matter, papa; yet I don't think he would mind your knowing it, if it went no further." And then she told him the whole story.

"It is most interesting, I am sure, my dear Ella," was his remark when she had quite concluded—and indeed he had listened to her with a patience and attention which he seldom awarded to long narratives from anybody—"and I need not say that by me this revelation of Mr. Aird's domestic romance will be held sacred. To my mind it does him infinite credit. Gad! it must have been rather embarrassing for him when the blonde arrived (*not* 'per invoice') instead of the brunette, eh?"

"Oh, papa; don't laugh. If you had seen poor Mr. Aird's face when he was telling me about it!"

"I'm glad I didn't, my dear; it's not everybody that has your command of countenance. How very much in love the chaplain's wife must have thought him, to have described the young lady so much above her physical merits! I am not laughing now, Ella. I only allowed myself to imagine the situation for one fleeting instant. I think it was most laudable, and showed the man—for one thing—to be a thorough gentleman."

"Mr. Aird is certainly that, papa."

"It struck me so the moment I set eyes on him; his constant solicitude for his boy, too, convinced me that he had a tender heart. The poor boy is very delicate; I should almost doubt," added Mr. Josceline, reflectively, "his ever living to grow up."

"Oh, papa; don't talk like that! It would break his father's heart. And Davey is such a charming child."

"Just so; and he is evidently as attached to you as though you were his second mother. Both father and son have excellent taste, that's certain."

"But it made me quite uncomfortable, papa, to hear Mr. Aird express his thanks; they were so out of all proportion to the service rendered."

"Such a conviction, my dear," returned Mr. Josceline, earnestly, "is the unfailing index of a generous nature. But, at the same time, it is not

everybody who would have walked for miles on a day like this, and gone without their lunch too, to oblige a comparative stranger. He feels, no doubt, as though he could never do enough for you—and quite right too.”

“My dear papa!”

“The fact is, my dear Ella, you don’t appreciate your own position. If a young man had done it, it would have been nothing, or next to nothing; if a girl like Miss Jennynge had done it (though, as a matter of fact, she would have seen him at York first), it would have been civil, and that’s all; but for you——”

“Well, really, papa,” interrupted Ella, laughing, “I don’t see why the action was more meritorious in my case than it would have been in hers.”

“That is just what I complain of; you do not understand your own superiority. Now, Mr. Aird, I am happy to say, did. He knows that nature intended you not to run on errands, but to have services rendered you by other people. He is a man whose judgment I applaud, and whose virtues I revere. You may depend upon it, Ella, that man was an excellent husband.”

“I feel sure of that, papa.”

“He didn’t fall in love with his wife, you see, at first sight—though he indulged in that folly with somebody else, which came, as it almost always does come, to nothing—but he grew to love her day by day, and year by year. That is the true secret of married happiness.”

“I suppose it is,” said Ella, thoughtfully. She was wondering what was the secret of her father’s marriage, and whether that had resulted in happiness or not. His present vein of philosophy was altogether new to her, nor did she understand its purport.

“Then, another thing which strikes me as an important feature in Mr. Aird’s case,” he continued, “and which should be a lesson to all young people, is that Duty itself proved the gateway to Love, though it did not seem at first to lead thither. The whole story is, in fact, not only, as I have said, most interesting, but also most noteworthy; and now, dear, that you have had your lunch, and listened so patiently to my sermon, you can run upstairs and take off your bonnet.”

Mr. Josceline had an idea that young women were more given to reflection in their own rooms than elsewhere; and he had his reasons for giving his daughter an opportunity for thinking over what he had said to her, and perhaps of giving it a personal application.

CHAPTER XXI.

ILLNESS IN THE HOTEL.

On the way to her room, Ella met Davey’s ayah—a black nurse called Abra, who, with the servants at the *Ultramarine*, was the cause of as great excitement (not unmingled in their case with alarm) as were Mr.

and Miss Josceline to their masters and mistresses ; she looked as white as a black woman could, and in a state of extreme agitation. "Oh, mees," she cried, "Masser Davey is taken ill ; I am going for his papa."

"But you have surely not left the child alone?"

"No, no ; a kind lady is with him," and she pointed to the nursery door, and fled downstairs as fast as the peculiarity of her attire—which resembled a night-dress over a dressing-gown—would permit.

By Davey's bedside was Mrs. Wallace, whom the nurse had called in to her assistance. It was not unusual for the child to be put to bed in the day-time, but on this occasion it was clear that he was not fit to be anywhere else ; his little face was pinched with pain, and his little hands like coals of fire.

"I am better now," he answered to Ella's affectionate inquiry ; "but I was cold and my teeth did chatter so that Abra was frightened. Now I'm quite warm."

Mrs. Wallace and Ella interchanged meaning looks. "Davey is a little over-tired," said the former, assuringly ; "papa will come up and kiss him, and then he will go off to sleep, and wake up quite well."

"My head, my head !" moaned the little patient, whom this agreeable programme seemed utterly to fail to cheer.

"Is it fever?" inquired Ella in a whisper.

"Yes ; no doubt. I think, dear Miss Josceline, if you sent for Dr. Cooper at once it would be our best plan."

"Let Ella stay here ; I like Ella," murmured the child. "I like you too, Mrs. Wallace," he added, and it was plain the effort to be thus considerate cost him something ; "but Ella is so pretty."

"He is quite right," said Mrs. Wallace, smiling. "It would be a waste to send Ella on a message when an ugly old woman like me could do it just as well ; would it not, Davey?"

"'Es it would," said Davey. And the kind old face (which had beauty in it too—for wiser eyes) gave place to the young one beside his pillow.

She returned presently with the ayah, and the news that Mr. Aird had gone out immediately after luncheon, and was not to be found. It was unusual for him to do so ; but, as Ella guessed, his feelings having been deeply moved by the recital of the morning, he had probably preferred to pass an hour or two somewhere in solitude.

The child dropped into an uneasy slumber, in which he continued till the Doctor came. Mrs. Wallace explained to him in a few words what had happened, and then he proceeded to make his professional examinations.

Davey cried a little on being woke—which with him was itself a sign of mischief, for the child was not given to tears—but presently dropped off again.

"What is it, Doctor?" whispered Mrs. Wallace.

"If you want a name for it, my dear madam," was the reply, "I could give you half a dozen very fine ones ; but, the fact is, one cannot

tell what is the matter yet. We shall know better in a few hours. Whatever it may be that threatens him, he is very delicate, and will want careful and intelligent nursing"—and he looked doubtfully at the ayah.

"I am an excellent nurse," said Mrs. Wallace; "or, at all events," she added, with characteristic modesty, "I ought to be, if experience is of any value."

"It is of inestimable value," said the Doctor; "but have you no one to ask leave of in the matter?"

"Not in a case like this," she answered, confidently. "My husband, I know, will have but one answer to such a request."

"Ella, Ella! don't leave me, Ella!" moaned the sick child, in a half dream.

"She is here, my darling," said Ella, softly, and was leaning down to kiss him, when the Doctor interposed.

"Do not do that, Miss Josceline. There is no knowing what mischief may be in store for the little lad; though, on the other hand," he added, with sudden cheerfulness, "after a few hours' refreshing sleep he may wake up quite himself again."

This last sentence was put in very dexterously. He had heard a hurried footstep behind, and guessed rightly to whom it belonged, namely to Mr. Aird himself.

The ex-Commissioner's face was a picture of woe and terror, and, as he stood at the foot of the little bed, he looked five years older than he had looked a few hours before.

"Do not wake him, Mr. Aird," said the Doctor; "the less excitement he has the better; while sleep is, on the other hand, the best of medicines."

"But you were speaking of mischief," returned the other, in an anxious whisper. "What is that you fear for my—my darling?"

"Well; he has, in my judgment—they may pass off, you know, but still he has them—some premonitory symptoms of fever."

"What! Scarlet fever?"

"Hush! pray control yourself, Mr. Aird, or you will do harm where you would most repent it. I don't know what fever at present; but, as it may be of a contagious kind, I had just forbidden this young lady to kiss the child."

Mr. Aird turned his eyes to Ella, and apparently became conscious of her presence for the first time; his face wore a look of confusion so much more than of recognition even then, that the Doctor proceeded to explain matters.

"These two ladies," he said, smiling, "I found, like a couple of angels, guarding this little fellow's pillow. Mrs. Wallace here, having, she tells me, had experience in illness, has kindly volunteered to nurse him. He will want nursing, and I cannot say I have any very responsible person to recommend in the village."

"God bless you!" said Mr. Aird, fervently, his eyes glancing gratefully at Mrs. Wallace, and then reverting to his child's face.

"There must be another sick nurse also," continued the Doctor, "whom I can provide; though I could hardly have put her in sole charge. It is a pity she is not younger, because with young people——"

"Ella! don't leave me, Ella!" repeated Davey, in the same half unconscious, half pleading tones.

"I am not going to leave you, darling," she replied; then turning to the Doctor, she added, "You see the child has a fancy for my presence, Dr. Cooper, which in his state I am sure should not be crossed. It is true that I am unaccustomed to nursing—or, indeed, to do anything useful—but I am most willing, and you must let me try my best."

"It would never do, Miss Josceline," answered the Doctor; "it would place too great a responsibility upon my shoulders. Mrs. Wallace, having her husband's consent in the matter, is her own mistress; but you don't know what you are asking. At this very moment I have my doubts whether I ought not to order you from the room."

"Do you think I am afraid of the fever?" inquired Ella, scornfully.

"I am sure you are not," said the Doctor, patting her on the shoulder. "You look to me as if you would be afraid of nothing except doing wrong."

"And that I should be doing if I left this child after he has asked me to stay and nurse him," said Ella, earnestly. "See how his little hand clasps mine?"

The Doctor could see it; but Mr. Aird could not, because his eyes were filled with tears.

"But, my dear young lady," said the Doctor, "you are not, I repeat, like Mrs. Wallace, here, the mistress of your own actions. Your father, whom I have the honour to know, must be consulted in the matter; and I honestly tell you that, in my opinion, he would be fully justified in saying 'No.' Mr. Aird himself will, I am sure, take the same view." For the first time the old Indian removed his anxious eyes from the sleeping boy, and fixed them elsewhere—on Ella.

"Miss Josceline," he said, "I feel your kind offer as I do that of Mrs. Wallace; my heart is too full to express how much. In her case, I accept it; in yours, I dare not. If anything should happen to you through—through Davey—— She has no business to be here, Doctor, as it is, has she?"

"She has not," replied the Doctor, decisively.

"Hush!" said Ella, "would you have me wake the child? Do you not see he has his hand in mine?"

Nothing more was said just then on that point. Dr. Cooper objected to the room as being too small in case of sickness, and recommended the little patient's removal into another apartment; and, having left divers other directions behind him, presently went home to make up his prescription.

In the meantime the news that Davey Aird had been taken ill, with a fever that might possibly prove infectious, spread, with the swiftness of contagion itself, over the whole house. Mrs. Trant, the landlady, though secretly almost beside herself with apprehension, maintained her usual philosophic demeanour, and made arrangements for preparing the Prior's room, as it was called, for the patient's reception; it formed one of two or three apartments, entitled the "Hostel," cut off by a long passage from the rest of the house, and practically isolated from it. Even if it should please God to visit the child and her own establishment with such a calamity as scarlet fever—which was far from being likely, for the place was health itself—all danger, she averred, would be confined to that locality.

This view of the case, however, it was difficult for Mrs. Trant to persuade her guests at the *Ultramarine* to share. Mrs. Armytage—who, however, was no coward, and did not dream of flight—expressed her opinion that scarlet fever the malady would turn out to be, nor was it to be wondered at that a child who was allowed to sit down to a late dinner with grown-up people every night should sooner or later have contracted some such malady.

On the other hand, Mrs. Jennynge immediately began to pack up; the idea of infection suggested death, which even the prospect it afforded of her being reunited to her beloved Nathaniel failed to rob of its terrors. Her daughter said nothing either for or against departure; the peril did not much alarm her; and if the report was true that Miss Josceline, for some inscrutable reason of her own, had volunteered to be the child's sick nurse, she hoped in her absence to regain that supremacy as "leading young lady" in the hotel drama of which Ella's arrival had undoubtedly robbed her. Moreover, she knew that the case was one in which opposition could have been of no avail. In some things—mostly small ones—her mother was submissive to her; in others she was not to be guided; and, having the absolute charge of the purse strings, was far less to be coerced.

The suspected bride was not inclined without good reason to leave her present quarters. It was not often that she had the opportunity of dining every day with an Honourable; and Mr. Josceline, who had a very pleasant way with all ladies, and especially with young and pretty ones, was really a favourite of hers. If small-pox had been in the air she would have fled within the hour; but scarlet fever, at the worst, did not disfigure one.

As for the gentlemen, the Professor had been for weeks in search of a butterfly with green wings, reported by the *Entomologist* to be in the neighbourhood of Wallington, the pursuit of which had already entailed on him several severe colds, an acute attack of rheumatism, and a sprained ankle, and whose capture would have more than repaid him for fifty fevers. Mr. Percival Lott was not a man to trouble himself about diseases of any kind; and, provided that no epidemic was so virulent as

to deprive the billiard table of its usual complement of pool players, it was free, so far as he was concerned, to run its course, and welcome. Mr. Wallace had a cheerful confidence that Emma (his wife) knew what she was about, and might be safely left to the guidance of her own judgment; if she thought it right to nurse the little lad, it was sure to be right. And as for infectious disorders—with the exception of the foot-and-mouth disease, with which it appeared nobody was threatened—they were the Doctor's business, and not his.

Mr. Josceline—who, thanks to the dignity of his position, was the last to be informed of the impending calamity—had it broken to him in a very unexpected manner. Ella's prolonged delay above stairs had not disturbed him; indeed, he was rather pleased at it than otherwise, for he flattered himself she was giving her attention in her own apartment to the subject he had so delicately dropped into her mind. He [was solacing himself for her absence with smoking cigarettes and perusing his favourite author, when there was a knock at the door—much louder than that modest tap which Phoebe the neat-handed was wont to administer—and in walked Dr. Cooper. Mr. Josceline honestly liked the man, and also, situated as he was, felt the advantage of making friends with him in many ways.

"I am delighted to see you, Doctor," he said, "and the more so because I don't want you—I mean professionally. This is really kind."

"I am sorry to say, however, Mr. Josceline," returned the other smiling gravely, "that my visit has a professional character. The fact is—though the danger may pass away—the *Ultramarine* is threatened with something very serious—a case of fever."

"Drains, of course," replied Mr. Josceline. "All these old houses are deficient in their sanitary arrangements."

"I don't know the cause at present, though I don't think it is anything local; little Davey Aird is down with some sort of fever."

"I am truly sorry to hear it, both for his own and father's sake." And for the moment Mr. Josceline was really sorry. He had, it is true, speculated vaguely in his own mind upon delicate little Davey's being removed from this world of sorrow; but many of us do the like without actually wishing the object of our calculations any harm.

"Yes; Mr. Aird is, of course, dreadfully distressed and anxious. My errand here, however, concerns you more nearly. When the child was taken ill it seems your daughter was called to his assistance; and she is even now by his bedside."

"Good gracious! But is not that dangerous?"

"Well; let us hope not. I will not conceal from you, however, that she has incurred—*has* incurred, mark me—a certain risk, although a small one."

"But why, in Heaven's name, does she not come away?"

"Well; the fact is, she is stopping there—in Heaven's name; that is, out of her natural goodness and kindness of heart. The child is evi-

dently attached to her, and she is loth to leave him. Mr. Aird, of course, is deeply grateful, but is sufficiently unselfish to regard the matter from what, I presume, will be your own point of view. She has volunteered with that excellent Mrs. Wallace—who, between ourselves, is worth all the other women here put together, though they think her such small beer—to nurse the child. That is, of course, with your permission. If the case should turn out to be a serious one, there will be undoubtedly risk. But in that event, as I have said, some risk has been already incurred by her having been in such close proximity with the little patient.”

“Has Mr. Aird sent you to ask my leave?”

“Nay, I cannot say that; it would have been highly improper of him, in my opinion, to make such a request; your consent, of course, would lay him under an eternal obligation; but I have come, as was my duty, to learn for myself your view of the matter. It is for you, and you only, to decide. The actual peril, though very appreciable, is, after all, remote; but it will very likely become necessary to isolate the case, and thereby deprive you for some time of Miss Josceline’s society. Mr. Aird’s last words to me were, ‘It is too much to ask of anybody;’ and it is certainly a great deal to ask.”

Mr. Josceline turned away from his companion—an act of discourtesy which, unless in anger, he had never committed in his life—and gazed thoughtfully out of the open window, as though seeking the reply that was expected of him from sky and sea.

“In case I accede to this,” he answered, presently, “is my daughter to be removed from me now, from this moment? Am I not to see her?”

“Of course, Mr. Josceline, I cannot prevent your seeing her, but I think it would be highly injudicious. At present we know the extent of probable infection, if infection there should be. It is limited to four persons; for doctors, you know, are like Old Bailey attorneys, who, notwithstanding the immorality of their clients, always remain pure and good, neither catching anything themselves nor communicating it to others.”

That Mr. Josceline had no smile for this, showed how deeply he was moved by the thoughts within him.

“I owe it to Mrs. Trant and to her lodgers,” continued the visitor, “that the danger should be minimised as much as possible. I would prefer you not to see Miss Josceline—since to do so would give me another cause for anxiety—unless you have resolved to forbid her to carry out her present intention. If, on the other hand, you are prepared to permit it——”

“I *am* prepared,” interrupted Mr. Josceline, suddenly. “I have quite made up my mind. I think it would be wrong of me to step between my daughter and an act of Christian charity. Tell her, with my dear love, that she has my full permission to nurse the child.”

The other gazed at him with an admiration that was not, however, unmixed with some surprise.

"Such a determination does you honour, Mr. Josceline; it is one that few fathers—with a daughter so dear to them, as I know Miss Josceline is to you—could have brought themselves to entertain. She will, I am sure, be most grateful for your consent; and, as for Mr. Aird——"

Mr. Josceline waved his hand as though that consideration was of small consequence indeed, as compared with other matters, and also to indicate that he wished to be alone—as, indeed, he did.

"I will leave you, sir," continued the Doctor, gravely, "to your own thoughts, which should be happy ones if the reflection of having performed a noble and unselfish action can give happiness." And, with a cordial grasp of his large hand, he left Mr. Josceline to his meditations.

These were not altogether of the kind that his visitor had anticipated; though, on the whole, as he had hinted, they conferred considerable satisfaction.

"I am right, I am surely right," murmured Mr. Josceline to himself; "such an opportunity as this should not be let slip. My time is short the risk is small; the prize is great.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE INVITATION.

THE company at the *table-d'hôte* that day were much diminished in numbers. Some intending lodgers who had arrived at the hotel, on hearing that there was risk of fever, had instantly taken their departure, so that there were no new recruits; while the absence of Ella and of Mr. Aird and of his son from one side of the table, and of Mrs. Wallace from the other, made very melancholy gaps. Felspar and Vernon, in consequence of the latter's ailment, also failed to present themselves, so the guest-roll at the *Ultramarine* was limited to eight persons. This, however, had the effect of making them more like a family party than ever, while the subject of conversation, being of course little Davey's illness, drew them in some respects still nearer together by reason of its unusual seriousness. The degrees of acquaintanceship vary less in proportion to the frequency of meeting than of our common interest in the matters discussed. This circumstance, it is true, did not mitigate the hostile feeling between Mrs. Armytage and Mrs. Jennyng; they were irreconcilables, and would have quarrelled on the same raft after a shipwreck; but it made the relations with each of these ladies and the rest of the party decidedly more close and familiar. All, too, were agreed that the conduct of the granddaughter of the Earl of Boroughby in exposing herself to the dangers of infection for the sake of little Davey was above all praise. Miss Jennyng was especially loud in her commendations, which were also so far genuine that she thought Ella could not have done better than have thus cut herself off from society, and left her (Anastasia) in possession of the field.

"I only hope," said Mrs. Armytage, "that Miss Josceline will find herself repaid; but I am afraid our Indian friend is not very gracious, while the poor child—though, indeed, it is not his fault—is sadly spoilt, and likely to turn out a very troublesome patient."

"I hope," said Mr. Josceline, smiling gravely, "that my daughter has no expectation of any reward save that which is derived from the consciousness of having done her duty."

"I am sure she has not," said Mrs. Jennyng, eagerly.

"Goodness gracious! what other expectation could she have?" observed Mrs. Armytage, sharply. "The impudence of the woman," as she afterwards expressed it, in thus volunteering a corroboration of Mr. Josceline's sentiments, "really surpassed everything."

"And in acknowledging Miss Josceline's goodness," continued Mrs. Jennyng, bent on recommending herself to the attention of the brother of the Earl of Boroughby, "we must not forget the self-sacrifice which her father has shown in the matter. He has not only exposed his daughter to a frightful risk, but voluntarily deprived himself of her society."

"In that respect Mr. Wallace has sacrificed himself as much as I have," said Mr. Josceline, modestly.

"Whatever my wife thinks it right to do *is* right," observed the farmer, simply, "and ought to satisfy me."

"Very proper," "a very sensible observation," "just so," murmured the company. They had no objection to Mr. Wallace entertaining such noble sentiments, or any others; but the idea of his supposing his case to be a parallel one with that of the Hon. George Emilius Josceline struck them as absurd to the last degree. Earls' grand-daughters are rare, while the supply of farmers' wives (should anything happen to one of them) is practically unlimited.

"I have just heard from Dr. Cooper," continued Mr. Wallace, "that both Mr. Felspar and Mr. Vernon offered their services to him to help nurse the little fellow."

"Deuced kind of them," muttered Mr. Percival Lott, twirling his moustaches. "Let us hope they were not moved to play the part of Good Samaritans by the fact that Miss Josceline had undertaken that of Miss Nightingale."

"For shame, Percy!" exclaimed the suspected bride; "Mr. Josceline will hear you."

As a matter of fact that gentleman *had* heard him, and, though not a muscle of his countenance betrayed the fact, had done so with considerable interest. Had Mr. Percival Lott winged his random shaft aright, he wondered? If so, he had not taken his own precautions in vain as respected Mr. Vernon; and it might be necessary to take others. His hope was, however, that by the time Ella had finished her engagement as nurse she might have entered into another—of another kind—which would render any further attentions on the part of the young contributor to the *Mayfair Keepsake* superfluous.

"I think if Mr. Felspar offered his services to nurse little Davey," observed Mrs. Jennynge, indignantly, "it was very improper of him."

"One would think you were his mother," ejaculated Mrs. Armytage. "He is old enough to do as he pleases, I suppose."

"I said nothing about age, Mrs. Armytage," answered Mrs. Jennynge, trembling with indignation. "It is true I am not—as you are so polite as to suggest—his mother; but I am his employer. He has undertaken to do a certain work for me which it would be quite impossible for him to accomplish if he became a sick nurse."

"But we thought all that was over," returned Mrs. Armytage, bluntly.

"All what was over?" exclaimed her rival, shaking like an autumn leaf, and, like it, exceedingly red.

"Why, everything. We heard that you were going away, bag and baggage; frightened out of your wits at the idea of catching the scarlatina."

Poor Mrs. Jennynge looked as if she had caught it already; yet she felt a sense of relief, too, for when Mrs. Armytage had said "we thought all that was over," she had had a dreadful apprehension that she was referring to something more serious than her mere departure, and the idea of which she had secretly begun to entertain in her mind.

"We hear a great many things that are not true," she observed, with dignity; "but people of good sense do not repeat them."

"Hoity toity!" exclaimed Mrs. Armytage, laughing; "what a fuss about nothing! Are you going to run away from us, or are you not?"

"I have really not quite made up my mind," answered Mrs. Jennynge.

Upon the whole she preferred Mrs. Armytage's manner when it was downright rude, as in the present case, to when it was merely aggravating; and, moreover, there was a certain reason which caused her to feel satisfaction at having had the fact thus publicly extracted from her, that she was still in doubt as to leaving the hotel. On Mr. Josceline this news had a contrary effect; he had not heard that Mrs. Jennynge had any intention of quitting the *Ultramarine*, and the bare possibility of it discomposed him exceedingly. He contrived, as the ladies left the room, to have a few words with the last of them, who, in the order of exit, was naturally Miss Jennynge.

"I hope this is not true," he said, with marked concern, "about your mother's thinking of taking you away from us?"

"I am sure I don't know, Mr. Josceline," she answered, with a little pout; "you heard what she said just now. She is still, it seems, in a state of indecision."

"But you don't mean to go, yourself, I'm sure—or, at least, I hope." And Mr. Josceline looked down and sighed, as if he had been five-and-twenty, and had said too much.

"Well, of course I don't; but in matters of this kind I have no in-

fluence with my mother whatever, I do assure you. Now I think a word from you—"

"From me!" Mr. Josceline looked more surprised than he could express. "Oh, dear, if you think *that*, I will certainly speak. I confess, my dear Miss Jennynge, I am quite unscrupulous, and actuated solely by selfish motives."

"You selfish? When you have deprived yourself of your daughter's society to benefit others?"

"Yes; but then I thought I should have had it in some measure made up to me; I flattered myself that you and your mother, for instance, would have made a great deal of me now that I was left alone; that I should be honoured with more of your society; and as for your running away from the hotel and leaving me to the tender mercies of Mrs. Armytage, such an idea never entered into my head. It is what the newspapers call 'A Case of Heartless Desertion.'"

"Well; I'll tell mamma what you say," said Anastasia.

"Do," said Mr. Josceline, boldly; "and I hope," added he, in lower tones, "that I shall not want a kind word from yourself; the kindest you can utter will be 'Stay,' remember."

"I'll ask mamma," said Anastasia, blushing—the phrase she was employing, perhaps, suggested to her the occasion on which it is generally used; and really Mr. Josceline's tone and manner were at once so tender and polite that he seemed to be offering his hand and heart to her upon a silver salver.

Of the manner of his address, however, she said nothing in speaking to her mother, but only conveyed to her the substance of it.

"Mr. Josceline," she said, "seems very much amazed at our going away, and says he quite depended on seeing more of us now that he has deprived himself of his daughter's society."

"Dear me, you don't say so!" replied Mrs. Jennynge, unable to conceal her delight. "I must say that is very complimentary to us, Statty."

"He is a gentleman of good birth," answered the young lady, "and of course appreciates natural refinement. He sees we are very different—indeed, he said as much—from Mrs. Armytage and Mrs. Lott, and the rest of them. That is only natural. Still, I must confess it is satisfactory."

Mrs. Jennynge cautiously abstained from saying how very satisfactory she herself felt it to be.

"No doubt, no doubt, my dear," she answered; "and since he is alone, and seems as it were to expect it, I think it would be only civil to ask him to take coffee with us this evening here, in our own apartment."

Anastasia looked about her a little doubtfully. One may have the most dutiful and domestic instincts, and yet exercise an independent judgment upon the personal appearance of a parent in a picture or plaster of Paris; and it struck Miss Jennynge that the collection of por-

traits of her papa, and especially that cast of him behind the screen, was somehow not calculated to impress the Hon. George Emilius Josceline favourably. If her mother began talking to him about them in the usual way, she felt that he would be very far from appreciating it.

"I think it would be only kind to ask Mr. Josceline, mamma," she answered; "only, being still a comparative stranger to us, I think it would be injudicious to show him—as you showed his daughter—all these memorials of dear papa; it would look as if we were anxious to place ourselves on a footing of familiarity—as, indeed, we are, you may say, but then I don't know whether such a course of conduct would not in his case have just the contrary effect."

Anastasia's arguments were slightly confused; and, indeed, she felt some delicacy, as well as difficulty, in expressing them; but, to her great relief, her mother appeared to appreciate the force of them.

"You are right, Anastasia," she said; "I will not take Mr. Josceline into that sacred spot"—by which phrase she indicated the folding screen which concealed the *post-mortem* presentment of her husband's features. "His sweet daughter appreciated the tender privilege I accorded to her, and sympathised with me to the uttermost; but men are so different."

"Very true, mamma," said Anastasia, with that sense of relief which we all experience when those who, by the inscrutable arrangements of fate, have the whip hand of us, show themselves more amenable to reason than we had expected of them. "I suppose we had better write Mr. Josceline a little note?" She said "we" because she was generally her mother's amanuensis on such occasions; for spelling, though we are told it comes by nature, does not come all at once; but, like gentlemanliness, commonly takes more than one generation for its perfection. To Mrs. Jennynge the longer words of our language were like fences, which her pen could not take at a run, but had to compass with caution and with the help of a dictionary.

It was somewhat to the younger lady's surprise, therefore, that her mother replied, "I will write the note to Mr. Josceline myself, Anastasia, and, in the meantime, just take down a volume or two from the book-case and arrange them on the table—the *Book of Birth and Beauty*, and *Whither we are Going*—it will make the room look more like home to him."

While this judicious selection of literature was being made for Mr. Josceline's entertainment, that gentleman was sitting in his own apartment with a letter from Ella in his hand, which had just been brought in to him by the neat-handed Phœbe.

"I'm feared it smells of smoke, sir," she said; "but Mrs. Trant she took it from the young lady with the tongs, and held it ever so long over the still-room fire."

"To disinfect it, I suppose? quite right, Phœbe," said Mr. Josceline, gravely, "but in future, if your mistress would smoke a cigarette over it as I am doing, it would be a safer plan—I mean as regards the letter."

"I'll tell her, sir," returned Phoebe, stolidly. "And, please, sir, I was to say as Miss Josceline was looking quite well, and didn't expect to catch nothing."

"I hope she will, nevertheless," was Mr. Josceline's reflection, as he opened the despatch.

"My dear papa, how ever can I thank you enough," it began, "for sparing me to nurse Davey? If you could see his pleasure—though I am sure I don't know why the child should have taken such a fancy to me—it would well repay you for the loss of my poor society; while, as for Mr. Aird, his gratitude is such that I feel almost afraid of his going down on his knees."

Here a smile of content stole over the reader's face, and he dropped the letter on his lap, and reclining in his armchair gazed on the curling smoke of his cigarette, as was usual with him in moments of reflection.

"Mrs. Wallace is worth her weight in gold, and it is all I can do to secure my fair share of what little work is required of us. She and I occupy what is called the Prior's parlour, which opens into the dormitory, an airy room where little Davey is located with the ayah. Our plan is to take a night-watch alternately; for Abra, though an excellent creature, has 'an exposition of sleep' upon her, she tells us, which lasts for eight or nine hours on a stretch, and is not easily broken into. On the other side of the room there is the refectory, where we are to take our meals; and beyond that is Mr. Aird's room, which, at present, however, he has shown no intention to inhabit. It is impossible to get him away from Davey's pillow, though Mrs. Wallace promises it shall be done in due time: it is curious what a force of will has suddenly developed in her—quite as strong as is exhibited by another lady of our acquaintance—but only exercised, as it seems, in her case, in behalf of others. You may be quite sure, dear papa, that with good Mrs. Wallace I am in safe hands. Nothing troubles me but the thought that you may miss me a little bit, though I know how proud and pleased everybody will be to make much of you; Mrs. Wallace tells me you are such a favourite with all the ladies here that I feel quite jealous. Dr. Cooper has called again, but can say nothing decisive yet; to see poor Mr. Aird hanging upon his words and looks, is quite pitiful. I shall write you a bulletin daily—let us hope there will be but few of them—and I need not say that the greatest blessing to me in quarantine will be a letter from your dear self.

"Your loving daughter,

"ELLA JOSCELINE."

"That is a good girl," muttered Mr. Josceline; "not one in a thousand is like her; no, nor one in ten thousand. To come of such a stock, too! Bah! what rubbish people talk of birth and blood! Not that I ought to blame them—the idiots. What, *another* bulletin, Phoebe?"

"No, sir; leastways, I don't know, sir," returned the waitress, simply, "unless you mean a billy-doo; it's from Mrs. Jennyngs. I

was to say you were not to trouble to write, but just to say 'Yes,' or 'No.'"

"Very good; my compliments, then, and say, I shall have great pleasure."

It was not often, although so prodigal of smiles in company, that, when he was alone, Mr. Josceline indulged himself in them; but on this occasion he leant back in his chair with Mrs. Jennynge's open note in his hand, and fairly shook with inward merriment.

"Dear Mr. Josceline,—The absence of your charming daughter must be my excuse for asking you to do us the honour of taking coffee with us this evening. Since you are absolutely alone, you may find our society a relief; at least, I myself have sometimes discovered that anything is preferable to solitude and the recollections of the past. I am especially hopeful to see you this evening, since it may be the last—though we have not *quite* made up our minds upon that subject—that we may spend at Wallington Bay. I shall leave it with much regret; but, on the other hand, I hardly like to expose my dear and only Anastasia to the risk of contagion. You have permitted your sweet daughter, it is true, to expose herself to it, but at her own request, and in the sacred cause of duty. Anastasia's case is different, and I scarce know what to do; there was a time when I had no need to seek for advice, but had it voluntarily proffered by the best of husbands. There is none, alas! to help me in my doubts and troubles now. However, I have no right to intrude such sorrows upon the ear of—I had almost written a stranger, but I must permit myself to substitute—of so recently acquired a friend as yourself. I forget, I am ashamed to say, whether you take cream or hot milk with your coffee, so have ordered both.

"Yours faithfully,

"JANE JENNYNGE."

"By Jingo, Phoebe was right, and it is a *billet doux*," murmured Mr. Josceline, softly. "Things are taking a most convenient turn, and in the very nick of time. Pah! How her note smells of india-rubber! And what a lot of erasures there are in it! The pen-knife must have been instigated, I should imagine, by the dictionary. The whole appearance of the thing reminds me of the 'holiday-letter' one wrote at school under the master's eyes; but the composition is *sui generis*, and certainly intended for no eye but mine. What an old fool she is! Never mind," he sighed—and his gaze fell on the note he had received from Ella—"it is for *your* sake, my darling; and I do not grudge the sacrifice."

And with a glance in the mirror over the mantelpiece, and another at his "filbert" nails, he repaired to the widow's sitting-room.

Babies and Science.

BABIES have at length attracted the eye of the savant, and have proved a fruitful object of observation and reflection, and henceforward we may expect this numerous class of the community to be held in high esteem generally. It will probably be admitted by the candid mind that the infant class has not in general commanded a large amount of respect. In point of fact, one may almost say that, just as science needed the infant as so much material for speculation, so the infant needed science to endow it with some significance in the system of things, to justify its presence here on the earthly scene, and to call forth from its elders a due amount of respectful attention and consideration. With one half of the adult population babies have of course always been recognised as an integral part of the social structure. To the feminine mind, when not too confined by selfish vanities or embittered by prolonged disappointment, the baby is apt to appear one of the most considerable interests of life. The mother, the nurse, and the sympathetic aunt appear to find an inexhaustible charm in all the events of babyhood. There is a tender beauty in its fragile form, a delightful surprisingness and mystery in all its small ways, which goes straight to the kindly heart of the sex. Yet while one sex has thus set up the baby as an object of special regard under the form of baby-worship, the other and harder sex has coldly held itself aloof from what it has chosen to consider these frivolities. Not only to the crusty bachelor uncle, even to the father himself, the arrival of a baby has commonly presented itself in anything but the light of a joyous occurrence. When congratulated by his friends on the event, he has perhaps bitten his lip as there have arisen before his mind images of a home rendered noisy and chaotic by the invasion of doctor, nurses, &c., of a wife continually pre-occupied, of new doctor's bills, and so on. If given to philosophise, he might be tempted to ask what purpose is served in the economy of things by the helpless infantile condition making such large demands on the time and energies of others. When the voice of his wife woos him to join the feminine company of baby-worshippers, he proves as hard as flint. He says that he can see nothing in this early and vegetal period of human existence to attract him, that all babies are alike, and so on—utterances which are of course shocking heresies from the mother's point of view. In short, to the male sex as a whole, the baby during the first six months of its life is apt to appear, if not something positively wrong in the arrangement of things, at least something quite unimportant which calls for no notice, and is best put out of sight as far as possible.

Now to this state of things science seems to be making an end. Women may console themselves for men's long contempt of their view of things by reflecting that the obdurate sex has at length been converted, if not by feminine arguments, to their own way of thinking. Science has become a champion of the neglected rights of infancy; it has taken a whole period of human life under its special protection. And in doing this it has constituted itself the avenger of a whole sex.

How, it may be asked, does science effect this admirable result? What arguments is she able to produce potent enough to overcome the deeply organised and seemingly hereditary contempt of babyhood by man?

The first thing that babies needed was to have their existence justified, and this service has been amply rendered them by the newer science of biology. The helplessness of the new-born child is, as we know, peculiar to the progeny of our race. The young of other species often show an extraordinary readiness to manage for themselves as soon as they see the light. The perfect equipment of the newly-hatched chick, for instance, which can straightway peck away at tiny grains of meal with as much precision as though it had passed the period of incubation in doing nothing but pecking, is something that is almost irritating to the human spectator. Even the young of higher species, as those of the familiar mammals, are able to get about and to explore their new world in a wonderfully short time. In contrast to this the human infant begins life in the most pitiable condition of helplessness. It has to be closely tended, nourished, and even carried about for many months before it can do anything on its own account or take a single step in life.

The evolutionist has found a meaning for this apparent defect in the organisation of the human offspring. He tells us that as creatures rise in the scale of organisation they are called on to adapt their actions to a much wider variety of circumstances. The lower species have to go on doing the same thing over and over again, and exactly in the same way; this routine suffices for the preservation of such creatures amid the simple conditions of their existence. On the other hand, the higher species, having to adapt themselves to much more complex and changeful surroundings, are continually called on to vary their actions, and to modify their mode of life. The difference may be seen by comparing what an insect, as a bee, and what a predatory mammal, such as a fox, has to do in order to obtain its food. In the case of the bees, the surrounding conditions, namely, the presence of honey-stored flowers, being pretty uniform, all that is needed is a few sensations of sight, and a number of curious but perfectly unvarying instincts. The fox, on the other hand, having to look up his pabulum in ever-varying circumstances, having moreover to cope on occasion with all sorts of new and unforeseeable difficulties, must substitute intelligence for instinct; that is to say, must continually be consciously awake, observing, reflecting, reasoning, and voluntarily adjusting his actions to the particular new set of circumstances in which he happens to be placed at the moment.

Now this capability of adjusting actions to varying conditions is the growth of individual experience: it cannot be transmitted by inheritance. It is the result of individual learning, and presupposes a gradually accumulated store of sense-impressions, and the functions of memory and reasoning. On the physiological side this development of intelligence means the building up of complex nerve-structures in the higher centres known as the brain, such construction proceeding in close connection with the daily exercise of the sense-organs and the muscular system. It would appear to follow then that the young of the higher and more intelligent animals will be born with these centres but very little developed. And this is what we find. The stupidity of the pup is proverbial. While the lower species which are sufficiently equipped for life by a few instincts involving relatively simple nervous arrangements come into the world in a high state of nervous development, the more complex organisms necessarily enter it in a very low stage.

And here the reader will, I trust, begin to see what all this has to do with the helplessness of infancy. Man is far removed above even the nearest species in intelligence and in cerebral power. Consequently there remains in his case very much more to be done in the way of nervous construction after the senses come into play, and individual experience begins. That is to say, we shall expect the human infant to enter life in an exceptionally backward condition of nervous development. And this is what we find. The brain of the newly-born child is, as everybody knows, very badly finished off, being not even securely encased in its protective covering, the skull. And this backward condition is seen, too, in the well-known fact that the development of the brain goes on at so rapid a rate during the first year of life. It is as though in the case of the infant all cerebral connections had to be made after birth, though they are capable of growing very rapidly when once the external stimulus is forthcoming.

The reader may here interpose: "You are only explaining all this while how it is that the new-born child is *relatively* more backward than the newly-hatched chick; that is to say, how it happens that there is so much left to be done after birth in the case of man. But you have not explained why the baby is *absolutely* worse prepared than the chick; how it is, for example, that the chick can at once walk, whereas the infant cannot." A little attention will, however, show that this result too is involved in the differences emphasised above. The muscular system is in close organic connection with the nervous structures. Consequently, if the nervous centres are very incompletely formed at birth, we may expect the muscular apparatus to be in a poor state of preparation also. But, again, the movements of the child have in general to be much more complex, variable, and more under the control of volition than those of the young of lower species: from which it follows that they have to be largely learnt in the course of individual experience, and in connection with the use of the sense-organs. In other words, there is but little room

in the case of the human offspring for such rigidly fixed habits of movement as the young of some of the lower species manifest from the first. This consideration certainly holds good of the upper limbs, the arms and hands, the acquisition by which of their intricate and subtly varying actions would seem to be positively hindered by the existence of definite instinctive movements at first, and probably presupposes a greatly unformed and plastic condition of the motor apparatus at birth. And if this is so, the want of muscular power in other quarters of the organism, as in the lower limbs and neck, might be regarded as necessarily correlated with this backward condition of the arms.

If this reasoning is sound, we may understand how it came to pass that the new-born child first began to be so unable. And having once fallen to some extent into this condition of helplessness, the evolutionist helps us to understand how it might possibly be kept in this condition by the action of other forces. In order to show this, he may reason as follows. The dependent condition of the infant would call forth impulses of tendance, protection, &c., on the part of the parent; only on this condition could the family, the community, or the race be preserved. This tendance of infancy would develop the first germs of benevolent feeling, and so become the starting point in the humanising and socialising of our nature. That is to say, through the mere habit of denying self and of attending to the wants of the unsheltered infant, the mother would come to possess the germs of altruistic sentiments, affection and sympathy. The harder male sex, which even at this dimly imagined period in the history of the race did little in the way of tending his offspring, would of course not directly reap the advantage of this rudimentary moral development, yet through the impartial action of the laws of inheritance it might subsequently, contrary to its deserts, participate to some extent in the blessings of humane and kindly sentiments.

This being so, there being this great gain to the family and the community as a whole, through the first exercises of ministering affection in response to the urgent demands of needy infancy, the maintenance of this condition of incapacity and of dependence on others might perhaps be aided by the action of natural selection. Whether the period of infancy has been actually lengthened by this cause or not, it is a fact that it is longer in the case of civilised man than of the savage. This may be due, of course, to the same causes which explain its shorter durations. It is to be noted, however, that the development of the impulses called forth by infancy would certainly tend directly to lengthen it to some extent, by discouraging the infant's instinctive attempts to shift for himself. Where these impulses are strong the amount of pleasure attending their satisfaction is considerable. There is to the feminine mind a luxury in doing as much as possible for the needy dependent infant. And by the force of habit the impulse to tend, to watch, and to provide persists after the need of its exercise vanishes. It is said by the farmer's wife that the hen takes it very much to heart when her

brood begins to disperse and go foraging for themselves. And, however this be, it is certain that there are plenty of human mothers who, through the force of habit, and for the sake of protracting the enjoyments of tendance, try to keep their children in the baby stage as long as possible. And such treatment does apparently lengthen the term of physical incapacity, since it prevents that exercise of organ which is necessary to every kind of development.

This, then, is the utterance of science. She bids all male scoffers at the trivialities of babyhood recognise in this seemingly insignificant phenomenon one of the main sources of human greatness. She says to them, this state of infantile frailty and imbecility is causally connected with all the blessings of social life. It is these babes and sucklings which first touched the adamant heart of mankind, making it vibrate in pulsations of tenderness. Had there been no babies there would have been no higher intellectual development, no sacred ties of kinship, friendship, and co-patriotism. Nay, more, but for the appearance of the infantile condition which you rash ingrates are wont to ridicule as molluscous, gelatinous, and so on, there would have been no human race at all : and you would not have been here to criticise nature and her ways as glibly as you do.

In this way science has come to the aid of mothers and nurses by stopping the mouth of the male blasphemer of nature. She has found a *raison d'être* for infancy, redeeming the whole class of babies from the charge of being perfectly useless incumbrances. She has compelled proud man to bow in deference to the views of the other sex, and to recognise in the phenomenon of babyhood something profoundly significant, a necessary link in the chain of cosmic events.

But science has done still more than this. She has become the ally of the natural admirers of babies in their endeavour to win over the reluctant interest of men. One may almost say that she has entered into a harmless conspiracy with mothers to lure the sluggish brain of man on to perceive something of the mysterious charm that surrounds the baby. Thus she has enabled women to gain a complete triumph over the host of unholy male scoffers. Their victory is like that of our Saxon forefathers over their pagan foes, or like that of Antonio over Shylock ; the defeated party is compelled to adopt the faith of the victor.

And how, it may be asked, does science effect this still more wonderful result ? By what magical arts does she attract the dull male eye to the unobtrusive beauties of infancy ? She does so by awakening a scientific interest in the baby. Men are too obtuse, too coarse-fibred, to feel the subtle fascination of babyhood all at once. They must be bribed by an admixture of scientific interest before they will come to see all the lovely aspects of the object. Just as the naturalist gets to feel a kindly interest in the animals that yield him so much intellectual gratification, so the male sex may be unconsciously led on to admire and delight in the æsthetic side of babyhood by first becoming impressed with its scientific value.

Yes, the baby has become an important object of scientific scrutiny, and in this way. The modern psychologist, sharing in the spirit of positive science, feels that he must begin at the beginning, study mind in its simplest forms before attempting to explain its more complex and intricate manifestations. This impulse to study the elementary modes of mental activity has led the psychologist to greatly extend the range of his observation. Instead of confining himself to looking into his own consciousness, he carries his eye far afield to the phenomena of savage life, with its simple ideas, crude sentiments, and naïve habits. Again he devotes special attention to the mental life of the lower animals, seeking in its phenomena the dim foreshadowings of our own perceptions, emotions, &c. Finally he directs his attention to the mental phenomena of infancy, as fitted to throw most light on the later developments of the human mind. He sees here the first beginnings of that work of construction by which all mental growth takes place. It is during the twelve months or so of infancy that the blurred mass of sensation begins to take form and to resolve itself into definite, distinguishable impressions; that these impressions begin to leave a trace or after effect in the shape of a mental image, which enters into combination with impressions in that mental state which we call perception, and which appears in a detached form as an expectation, a recollection, or a pure fancy. And it is during this same period that the foundations of the emotional structure are laid; that the simple feelings of pleasure and pain connected with the action of the vital organs and of the senses begin to combine in the forms of fear and love, anger and hope, and so on. And, finally, it is now that the activities of will first come into play, beginning to wear those tracks which will become later on the habitual lines of action of the developed will. If, then, the psychologist could only ascertain what goes on in the mind of the infant, he would be in a position to solve many a knotty question in his science.

Infancy has a peculiar interest to the psychologist for another reason. My readers are probably aware that it has long been a matter of dispute whether the mind comes into the world like a blank sheet of paper on which experience has to write, or whether it brings with it innate dispositions, as they are called, a kind of invisible writing which contact with experience will make legible but not create. For example, it has long been asked whether the child is born with an instinctive moral tendency to distinguish right and wrong actions, or whether this distinction is wholly impressed on it from without, by help of the experiences of punishment, &c., connected with the discipline of early life. Now it seems obvious that, if there are such innate dispositions, intellectual and moral, they ought to be observable in a germinal form in the first stages of life. And since we can only be certain of the existence of any innate or inherited element by discovering that something appears in the course of mental development which cannot be accounted for by the individual's own previous experience, it follows that it is of the utmost consequence

to the psychologist to note and record the first phases of mental history. To give an example, if the baby smiles in response to a smile long before experience and reflection can have taught it the practical value of winning people's smiles, there is clearly an argument for those who would say that we are born with an instinctive germ of sociality and sympathy.

If the psychologist is an evolutionist, and interested in studying the history of human development as a whole, the infant will attract his regards in another way. It is a doctrine of biology that the development of the individual roughly epitomises that of the race; that is to say, exhibits the main phases of this development on a small scale. If this is so, the study of infant life may be well fitted to suggest by what steps of intellectual and moral progress our race has passed into its present state. The attentive eye may thus find in seemingly meaningless little infantile ways hints of remote habits and customs of the human race.

Science having thus declared the infant to be a valuable phenomenon for observation, there has of late grown up among the class of scientific fathers the habit of noting and recording the various proceedings of the infant. Men who previously never thought of meddling with the affairs of the nursery have been impelled to make periodic visits thither in the hope of eliciting important psychological facts. The tiny occupant of the cradle has had to bear the piercing glance of the scientific eye. The psychological papa has acquired a new proprietary right in his offspring; he has appropriated it as a biological specimen. This new zeal for psychological knowledge has taken possession of a number of my acquaintance. These are mostly young married men to whom the phenomenon of babyhood has all the charm of newness, and who import a youthful enthusiasm into their scientific pursuits. Their minds are very much taken up with their new line of study. If you happen to call on one of them expecting to find him free for a chat, you may, to your amazement, catch him occupied in the nursery with trying to discover the preferences of the three-months' fledgling in the matter of colours, or watching the impression which is first made on the infant mind by the image of its own face in the glass. And, even when not actually employed in his researches, it will be found that his mind tends to revert to his engrossing study; and so all your attempts to engage him in conversation on matters of ordinary interest are apt to be frustrated.

These researches have been carried on amid various difficulties. On the part of the infant himself there is often a provoking want of responsiveness to the observer's wishes. Instead of showing himself bright, active, and suggestive at the moment when the studious parent happens to be free to make his observations, the youngster is stupid and dull, or, worse still, in a state of violent emotional agitation. Then there are difficulties on the part of the self-constituted guardians of the baby. The mother, if she is good-natured and sensible, smiles at the new interest which her lord and master deigns to take in his progeny. She is very

well satisfied to see that the despised baby has won any kind of notice from him, and enjoys a sense of triumph in watching the unwonted concern which he displays for its well-being. Yet the wife may easily become a formidable obstacle in the way of his researches. Her way of looking at babies unfits her from entering very cordially into the scientific vein. She rather dislikes their being made the objects of cold intellectual scrutiny and unfeeling psychological analysis. And she is apt to make a determined stand when the rash enthusiast for science proposes to introduce the experimental method as superior to that of passive observation. To suggest a series of experiments on the gustatory sensibility of a small creature aged from twelve to twenty-four hours is likely to prove a shock even to the more strong-minded class of mothers. And when it is proposed to exercise the youngster's ocular muscles so as to discover how soon he is able to follow a moving object, the proposer is pretty certain to hear of risks of a life-long squint, and so on.

If, on the other hand, as is not unlikely, the mother herself gets in time infected with the scientific ardour of the father, she may prove rather more of an auxiliary than he desires. Her maternal instincts impel her to regard her particular infant as phenomenal in an extra-scientific sense. She is accordingly on the look-out for remarkable infantile feats, and is disposed to ascribe to her baby a preternatural degree of intelligence. Finding that her husband is occupied in noting the various steps in the mental development of the child, she naturally brings all her supposed observations to him. And here arises a difficulty. Trained himself in habits of accurate observation, familiar with the common practice of confusing fact and inference, a practice especially common in the region of psychological observation, he is compelled to suspect the accuracy of these recitals. Yet he can hardly, in this case, tell his own wife that she is an inaccurate observer, for to do so would be not only to injure her feeling of self-respect, but violently to assault her most tender maternal feelings.

Again, the nurse may prove even a more invincible obstacle to these researches than the mother. Her dominion in the matter of babies is necessarily large, and if she takes exception to the father's line of research, she may succeed in effectually barricading the cradle against his scientific approaches. And it is not at all unlikely that she will strongly object to his plans. A nurse is apt to be deeply imbued with the conviction that babies are women's affair, and that men have their own business to attend to outside the nursery. Though she expects the father to notice his child and make much of its good points, for such praises are always felt by the nurse, in a vague, unreasoning way, to reflect glory on herself, she is not prepared for his taking any serious practical interest in her *protégé*. And then this habit of psychological inspection goes very much against the grain of your prejudiced, old-fashioned nurse. There is something uncanny in all this trying to get at the mysteries of the infant mind; it looks like an unhallowed prying

into things which are above human comprehension and ought to be accepted as matters of faith. Woe to the scientific father if he perseveres in his inquiries in the face of such opposition as this. His reputation will certainly be blasted in the eyes of at least one honest creature.

Nevertheless, in spite of these many difficulties, the work of accurately recording the psychical phenomena of infancy has already been carried out with considerable perseverance and method. An English journal which devotes itself to the interests of mental science has recently published a number of notes made by industrious fathers on the doings of their infants. A distinguished naturalist set the example by giving a curiously methodical record of the early mental development of one of his sons. And in France and in Germany we hear of similar results of this spirit of inquiry on the part of scientific men who happen to be provided with the necessary objects of observation.

I have just been fortunate enough to come into possession of a document containing the results of such a series of observations made by a father on his first boy. The paper contains not only a number of facts, but also some curious suggestions on the meaning of the facts. My readers may be interested in knowing more about these researches on the infant mind, and accordingly I shall conclude this account of the present relations of science to infancy by quoting from this document a few facts and suggestions by way of illustrating the method which is pursued by this class of paternal psychologists.

I may begin my sketch of the early history of this boy by remarking that he appears to be an exemplary infant—healthy, good-natured, and given to that infantile way of relieving the pressure of his animal spirits which is, I believe, known as crowing. Not believing in the classifications of temperament adopted by the physiologists of a past age, the father forbears describing his temperament. Also, not being a phrenologist, he has omitted to take elaborate measurements of his cranium. For my lady readers I may add that he seems, at least by his father's account, to be a good-sized, chubby little fellow, fair and rosy in tint, with bright blue eyes, and a limited crop of golden hair of an exceptionally rich, I don't know how many carat gold, hue; also, last and not least, that he boasts of the name of Clifford. The early pages of the record do not, I must confess, yield any very striking observations. For the first few days Master Clifford appears to have been content to vegetate like other babies of a similar age. Although a bonny boy, he began life in the usual way—with a good cry; though we now know, on scientific authority, that this being a purely reflex act consequent on the first action of the air on the organ of respiration, has not the deep significance which certain pessimistic philosophers have attributed to it. Science would probably explain in a similar way a number of odd facial movements which this baby went through on the second day of his earthly career, and which were highly suggestive of a cynical contempt for his new surroundings.

Yet, though content in this early stage to do little but perform the vegetal functions of life, the infant comes endowed with a nervous system and organs of sense, and these are very soon brought into active play. According to this record, the sense of touch is the first to manifest itself.* Even when only two hours old, at a period of life when there is certainly no sound for the ear and possibly no light for the eye, Clifford immediately clasped the parental finger which was brought into the hollow of its tiny hand. And this seems to agree with the doctrine laid down by evolutionists—a doctrine hinted at by Aristotle—that the special senses, sight, hearing, &c., are modifications of touch, and evolved by fine differentiations of the tactual surface.

The march of infantile intellect during the second, third, and fourth days appears in the case now considered to have been exceedingly rapid. On the second day there was observed by Clifford's papa a distinct movement of the head in response to sound. On this same day the previously futile attempts to bring the two eyes into harmonious action were crowned with a measure of success, and they were observed to converge for an instant on the father's face, if held invitingly near. By the fourth day the command of the eye was far greater, and now it was possible to notice the effect of an object in attracting the organ in a particular direction, if not too far from that of the point previously looked at. Not for some days, later, however, could one see any capability of following a moving object with the eye. The powers of movement generally made rapid progress during these four days, since it is recorded that on the fourth day Clifford, having clasped his father's finger, made what was apparently an abortive effort to carry it to his mouth. The father judiciously abstains from doing more than hint at the possibility of this being a survival of a deeply-organised cannibal instinct. The fact that infants carry everything to their mouths seems to point either to the presence of some primitive omnivorous instinct, or what seems at least equally reasonable, to the fact that the lips are a part of the organ of touch, and indeed among the most highly endowed parts of the organ, which may have been used in conjunction with the hands in the earlier stages of the development of the race much more extensively than now.

For the first weeks the baby lives in a very confined world. Clifford, at least, was supremely indifferent to the existence of everything lying beyond certain narrow limits of space. Even his own papa appeared to cease to exist for him as soon as he moved a yard or two away. One is disposed to guess that, if at this time of life the infant were capable of forming the idea of an external world, he would attribute persistence to an exceedingly small number of objects. He appears to lead very much the life of a stationary hydra, which knows of nothing save what accidentally comes within the narrow sweep of its tentacles.

* Taste, as involved in the necessary act of taking nourishment, is probably at first hardly differentiated from touch.

About the sixth week, however, these limits are broken through. The development of sensibility on the part of the eye and the ear, and the growth of the power of movement, tend greatly to expand the universe for our little spectator. The appearance of a power of recognising the direction of sounds and moving the eyes and head in conformity therewith is one of the most considerable events of infancy, worthy to be ranked, perhaps, with the acquisition of the power of walking. For now the infant mind comes to learn that things may exist when not actually seen, and arrives at some vague idea of what happens when objects pass for a time outside the range of the senses altogether.

While the range of knowledge of external things is thus widening, its depth is rapidly increasing too. The attainment of the respectable figure of eight weeks by Clifford appears to mark a point in the intimate knowledge of things within the sphere of his observation. The senses were now brought into lively action, the intervals between the exercise of the vegetal functions sleeping and feeding became longer, and there was a noticeable progress towards the calm attitude of contemplation which becomes the rational animal. Clifford now attentively regarded not only any foreign object, such as his mamma's dress, which happened to be within sight, but also the visible parts of his own organism. In the ninth week of his existence he was first surprised in the act of surveying his own hands. Why he should at this particular moment have woken up to the existence of objects which had all along lain within easy reach of the eye, is a question which has evidently greatly exercised the father's ingenuity. He hints, but plainly in a half-hearted, sceptical way, at a possible dim recognition by the little contemplator of the fact that these objects belong to himself, forming, indeed, the outlying portion of the Ego. He also asks whether the child, through a development of the sense of beauty, may have suddenly recognised something of that exquisite modelling of his tiny members on which his fond mother is wont to enlarge. But here the observer appears to be indulging in an unscientific vein of levity.

Psychologists are now agreed that our knowledge of the properties of material objects is largely obtained by means of touch and movement. This is borne out by the observations made on Clifford at this period of his existence. While viewing things about him he actively manipulated them. The organs of sight and touch worked indeed in the closest connection. Thus our little visitor was no mere passive spectator of his new habitat; he actively took possession of his surroundings: like the Roman general, he at once saw and conquered. From the eighth to the tenth weeks his manual performances greatly improved in quality, and the power of combining, or, as the psychologists now say, co-ordinating impressions made on the eye with movements of the arms, was rapidly developed. "When," writes the father, "Clifford was 76 days old, I first saw distinctly the putting forth of the hand with the definite purpose of reaching an object. Previously to this I had watched him

carefully to see how far he could direct the hand to an object held near him. I had tried him with a variety of attractive objects, such as my hand, scraps of coloured paper, and so on. These he regarded very attentively, and this habit of attention had manifestly grown of late. Among the objects which attracted him was his mamma's dress, which had a dark ground with a small white flower pattern. On this memorable day Clifford's hand came by accident in contact with one of the folds of his dress lying over the breast. Immediately, it seemed to strike him for the first time that he could *reach* an object, and for a dozen times or more he repeated the movement of stretching out his hand, clutching the fold, and giving it a good pull, very much to his own satisfaction."

While on this subject of manual exploration, I had better perhaps say a word or two about the later developments of the power of directing the hands. Clifford was 133 days or 19 weeks old when he acquired the power of carrying an object (a biscuit) to his mouth. It should be added that the father had been somewhat restricted in this experiment by the authorised guardians of the infant. A thing which was noticeable in this feat was the rapid increase in the precision of the movement. The aiming, from being awkward, soon became exact. What was still more noticeable was that when the biscuit was afterwards held a little further away, the boy distinctly leaned forward so as to reach it with his mouth. This was the first time he had been noticed to bend his body forward, though he had often been invited to do so by the father's holding out his arms to take him, and so on. The movement looked perfectly instinctive, and quite unsuggested by accidental experiences such as that by which the movement of stretching out the arm was discovered.

The culmination of this power of reaching visible objects was noticed when he was just six months old. The father then held an object a few inches beyond the reach of his arm; the astute little fellow made no movement. But as soon as the object was brought just within the sweep of his arm, he stretched forth his hand to seize it. The experiment was repeated and varied, new and unfamiliar objects being selected, and so on, and always with the same result. Clifford had now learned to interpret what Bishop Berkeley calls "visual language" so far as to recognise what amount of convergence of the two eyes answered to the *Ultima Thule* of his tangible world.

Let us now go back to the eighth and following weeks. The growing habit of looking at, reaching, and manually investigating objects, soon leads to the accumulation of a store of materials for the construction of those complex mental actions which we call perceptions. And often-repeated impressions, more and more clearly distinguished and classified, become the basis of definite acts of recognition. The first object that is clearly recognised by a conscious attention is the face of the mother. In the case of Clifford, the father's face was apparently

recognised about the eighth week—at least, the youngster first greeted his parent with a smile about this time—an event, I need hardly say, which is recorded in very large and easily legible handwriting. The occurrence gives rise to a number of odd reflections in the parental mind. His belief in the necessary co-operation of sight and touch in the early knowledge of material objects leads him to observe that Clifford's manual experience of his face, and more particularly of the bearded chin, has been extensive, an experience which, he adds, has left its recollection in his own mind, too, in the shape of a certain soreness. He then goes on to consider the meaning of the smile. "I cannot," he writes, "be of any interest to him as a psychological student of his ways. No, it must be in the light of a bearded plaything that he regards my face." Further observation bears out this argument by going to show that this recognition is not individual but specific: that it is simply a recognition of one of a class of bearded people; for when a perfect stranger also endowed with the entertaining appendage presents himself, Clifford wounds his father's heart by smiling at him in exactly the same way. Here the diary goes off into some abstruse speculations about the first mental images being what Mr. Galton calls generic images—speculations into which we need not follow the writer.

There is a yet higher intellectual power displayed about the same time in the germ of distinct anticipation. The moment when the baby mind first passes from the sight of his bottle to the imagination of the blisses of prehension and deglutition—a moment which appears to have been reached by Clifford in his tenth week—marks an epoch in his existence. It is plain that he can now not only perceive what is actually present to his senses, but shape representative images of what is absent. This is the moment at which, to quote from the parent's somewhat high-flown observations on this event, "mind rises above the limitations of the actual, and begins to shape for itself an ideal world of possibilities."

The above may perhaps serve as a sample of the observations made on the intellectual development of this privileged child. I will now pass on to quote a remark or two on his emotional development. I may add that the record of this phase of Clifford's early mental life is certainly the most curious part of the document, containing many odd speculations on the course of primitive human history.

The father remarks very early in the diary that the expression of pain or distress in general appears plainly to precede that of pleasure. Crying, of the conscious or really miserable sort, takes place long before smiling or even cooing. This, remarks our observer, probably points to the fact that in the history of the race the need of making known pains and wants was the more urgent, and so was the one to be first satisfied. Coming now to the particular feelings which have to do with others, it is noteworthy that the earliest feeling to manifest itself is that of antagonism or anger. At least, remarks the father, this was true in the case of Clifford's sister, who, when bidden at the outset of life to do her

duty in accepting the nutriment provided by nature, showed all the signs of passionate wrath. The first traceable germ of sympathy—the fellow-feeling which binds men together—appeared in Clifford's case in the eighth week in the shape of responsive cooing sounds when coaxed and comforted by the usual vocal appliances. The chronicler remarks on the fact of the much later appearance of scolding noises, and from this passes to speculations as to the period in human history when men began to exercise power and coercion over one another. There is, I may add, a touch of Rousseau-like sentiment in these remarks.

As to the emotions excited by physical objects, it is an exceedingly difficult thing, in the case referred to, to determine their precise nature. The feeling of wonder at what was new in the environment was a matter of common everyday observation. Among the objects which first excited a special interest and a prolonged effort of attention were pictures of very unequal degrees of artistic value. Clifford got into the way of taking special note of one or two bits of gaudy colouring when only six weeks old. In these it seemed to be partly the brightness of colouring in the painting or frame, partly the reflections of objects in the glass covering which attracted him. Other things which appeared to give him repeated and endless enjoyment of a quiet sort were the play of sunlight on the wall of his room, the reflection of the shooting fire-flame sent back by the glass covering the pictures, the swaying of trees, and so on. He soon got to know the locality of some of his favourite works of art, and to look out expectantly, when taken into the right room, for his daily show.

Much of this attention was evidently pleasurable: the bright light and the movement stimulated the growing sense, and gave the first crude enjoyment of beauty. The effect of the piano, which, though it made him cry the first time he heard it, afterwards quieted and delighted him, goes to prove the existence of such a rudimentary æsthetic sense. Yet this feeling of wonder was not always pleasurable. Novelty has its limit of agreeableness for the baby as for the adult mind, and too sudden a change in familiar surroundings is apt to be disconcerting and even distressing. Thus, when just twelve weeks old, Clifford was quite upset by his mother donning a red jacket in place of the usual flower-spotted dress. He was just proceeding to take his breakfast when he noticed the change, at the discovery of which all thoughts of feasting deserted him, his lips quivered, and he only became reassured of his whereabouts after taking a good look at his mother's face.

Even when the new object is not thus a rupture of the familiar, its strangeness may affect the infantile mind sadly. Clifford was often remarked by his father drawing a deep sigh after a prolonged inspection of something particularly mysterious, as the face of a clock, or the play of the reflection of the fire-flame. Wonder has its two bifurcating lines of development: it may pass into glad excitement, into an impulse of joyous worship, showing itself in smiles and cooings, or into oppressive awe or fear. In Clifford's case it was noticeable that the same object

would produce now the one, now the other effect, according to his condition.

Not only so—and here, says our chronicler, we come to the interesting point—a very few weeks would make all the difference in the effect of the same objects. For example, a not very alarming doll belonging to Clifford's sister, after having been a pleasant object of regard, suddenly acquired for him, when he was nearly five months old, a repulsive aspect. Instead of talking to it and making a sort of amiable deity of it as heretofore, he now shrieked when it was brought near. And there seems to have been nothing in his individual experience which could account for this sudden accession of fear. And, similarly, strangers who, as I have observed, once were impartially greeted with a hospitable smile, began about the same time (in his sixth month) to appear in a very disagreeable light.

These observations led Clifford's father to long speculations as to the inheritance of certain feelings. Thus he hints that the special interest taken by his child in reflections may be a survival of the primitive feeling respecting the second selves or ghosts of things which anthropologists, as Mr. E. B. Tylor and Mr. Herbert Spencer, tell us was first developed in connection with the phenomena of reflected images, shadows, &c. Yet he evidently feels a difficulty here, since Clifford somewhat provokingly remains supremely indifferent to his own reflection in the glass. He goes on to ask whether the fear called forth by the doll and the face of strangers at a certain stage of the child's development, is not clearly due to an instinct now fixed in the race by the countless experiences of peril in its early, pre-social, Ishmaelitic condition.

Among other feelings displayed by the young Clifford was that of amusement at what is grotesque and comical. When only four or five months old he was accustomed to watch the antics of his sister, an elfish being given to flying about the room, screaming, and other disorderly proceedings, with all the signs of a sense of the comicality of the spectacle. So far as the father could judge, this sister served as a kind of jester to the baby monarch. He would take just that distant, good-natured interest in her foolings that Shakespeare's sovereigns took in the eccentric unpredictable ways of their jesters.

I will not run the risk of wearying the reader by following the diary into the record of the early stages of the development of will. This is less rich and full than the other parts. After all, the "will" in this early stage of existence seems to be nothing but a sort of occult metaphysical "will to live" about which we have recently heard so much. What we mean by an orderly will is developed out of a number of instinctive impulses aided by recollection and intelligence. These instinctive impulses come into play in the first months of babyhood, and the chronicle of Clifford's achievements contains some curious facts on this head. To select but one, the observant father calls attention to the fact that, while the impulse to seize objects manifested itself, as we have seen,

when he was eleven weeks old, the impulse to relinquish showed itself considerably later. Thus, after he had first succeeded in carrying the nipple of his bottle to his mouth, his action failed of its object through the want of an impulse on the part of the hand to relax the grasp. And the first deliberate act of throwing away an object of which he had become tired did not occur till some months later. This fact leads the chronicler to go off into a somewhat cynical vein of reflection on the grasping propensities of the race.

I will conclude this fragmentary sketch of Clifford's early mental development by remarking that when twenty-seven weeks old he began to articulate sounds quite spontaneously. Up to this time he had had some understanding of sounds, for he would turn to the well-known lithograph recently given us by the enterprising publishers of the *Graphic*, when the words "cherry ripe" were spoken. But his own powers of vocal execution were of the scantiest. His vocabulary may be said to have been confined to vowel sounds ranging from the broad *ā* to a cockney *ow*, that is to say *ā-ōō*. But now he suddenly bethought himself to extend his range of articulation, and within twenty-four hours lit on the important additions "da! da!" and "ba! ba!" Here, then, we may take our leave of him, fairly on his way to become a rational animal, distinguished from all inferior creatures by the possession of a system of signs or a language.

I leave this transcript from the diary of a psychological observer to produce its own proper effect on the minds of my readers. They may not, perhaps, altogether share in the worthy parent's estimate of the importance of these researches. Some of them, particularly among the mothers, who have had their own field of inspection, may be disposed to regard certain of his observations as trite and commonplace. Others, again, of the cynical bachelor class, may think that they discover now and again traces of weak paternal sentiment, mingling with and adulterating the pure ore of scientific curiosity. And, finally, sober people may find some of the social speculations put forward in the record far-fetched if not absurd. However this may be, I feel I have done my task in letting them know something of the nature of the new fashion in the domain of psychological inquiry. Whatever the *scientific* worth of the results so far obtained, nobody but a cynical contemner of all human tenderness will doubt the *ethical* importance of an occupation which is so well fitted to soften the sex which nature has not taken the same pains to mollify that we have seen her take in the case of the other half of our race.

J. S.

A Bishop's Confession.

I.

"BEFORE you can be chosen as a missionary you must pass through an ordeal which will try whether you have every sort of courage—the physical and the moral."

These were the words which the General of the Franciscans had spoken to the young French monk, Brother Euphrasius, when the latter had applied to be sent as a missionary to China; and as the two were alone in the confessional, the good but shrewd old man added gently: "I have watched you, Euphrasius, and love you as a son; that is why I should like you to know yourself. You are not an ordinary monk, for you were a soldier, and I believe a brave one, before joining us; but it was a love disappointment which drove you into the Church, and that was weakness. A man of true moral courage would have remained in the world to bear his misery and do his duty in that state of life which he had adopted. You would have served Christ as well in the camp as in the cloister. Have you thought of this? Have you ever asked yourself whether it was not your wounded vanity, and, in part, a spirit of vindictiveness that sent you amongst us?"

"It may be," answered Euphrasius after a pause. He was kneeling with his arms crossed and his head bent in an attitude of the lowliest submission. "Father," he continued, making his full confession in a sob, "I cannot drive her out of my mind—I cannot."

"That's it," said the old man in a still gentler tone than before. "And you have been guided in almost all that you have done and now want to do by the desire of being revenged on her. You could not endure to live in the world and see her happy with another man. You said to yourself: 'I will plant a thorn in her breast; I will show her how she has wrecked my life.' Perhaps you are aspiring to the martyr's crown, in order that hearing how you died she may give back to you some of the love which now ought to belong wholly to her husband."

"God forgive me: it is all true," murmured the young monk in abject contrition, as he trembled in every limb.

"Well, pray God to move you with a purer spirit," said the Father. "It is but two years since you became a priest, and one only since you joined our brotherhood, and yet already the monotony of cloister life is beginning to pall upon you. The adventurousness and perils of a missionary's life tempt your mind; you cannot bear to end your days in obscurity, praying for yourself and for her whom you have lost. Yet recollect, my son, that your love as it burns now in your breast is deadly

sin. If you could bear to become contemptible in the eyes of this woman so that she might never repent having chosen your rival, if you could do something to give her full peace at the cost of your own pride, then your love would be good indeed, and sweet in God's sight, sweet in her's, too, when she came to know of it by-and-by in Heaven."

"I will pray for strength, Father," faltered Euphrasius almost inaudibly. Then he remained on his knees for some minutes longer, till, having received absolution for the sins he had confessed, he arose and walked off slowly to his cell.

The Father watched him with a sympathising glance as he went. He had no real intention of baulking the young monk's aspirations towards the life of a missionary, and the searching trial to which he had just put his conscience was only the beginning of that probation to which all must submit who want to go forth into heathen countries as apostles. As there are many forms of human weakness, so the methods of probation must be many and divers. Some have to be tested in the self-denial of creature comforts, some in endurance and temper, some in physical bravery. On these points there seemed to be not much need for trying Brother Euphrasius, who was abstemious as an anchorite, strong in body, and impervious to heat or cold; mild in temper; and as regards courage, a soldier who had been decorated for valour on the battle-field. Henri de Garderoy, as his name was in the world, had been one of the most dashing officers in the French army. He had won his captain's epaulets in the Crimea; but then coming home, he had learned that the girl to whom he had plighted his love had, during his absence, become affianced to another man. The blow had well nigh driven him mad. Angèle de Monteroix, the young lady in question, was of high birth, beautiful, fascinating, and gifted in many ways. Henri would have staked his life on her constancy; and yet, in spite of her plighted troth, and even as he was risking his life in war, winning laurels which were only precious to him because he hoped to lay them at her feet, even then she was untrue to him and gave her hand to a man of no great merit, all for money!

The contempt he felt for the girl who had betrayed him did not serve to cure Henri of his love. Angèle appeared to be indifferent to his reproaches. At the one interview which they had after his return she offered no excuses for her conduct; she told him that her love for him was dead, and she bowed her head to his scorn; but this did not wipe out her image from his heart. He lost all pleasure in his career and left the service, to go and wander in an aimless way over the world. Whilst on his travels he read in the papers of Angèle's marriage to her new lover, the Baron de Rosenheim, a banker nearly twenty years older than herself, and soon afterwards he learned that she was becoming one of the gayest leaders of fashion in Paris. Thereupon he returned to France, capitalised his fortune, and entered a seminary to study for priest's orders. Angèle had been callous to the lustre of his military glory, he would now shame her by his renunciation of all worldly things, and be

constant to her in the enforced celibacy of priesthood. Such were the thoughts uppermost in his mind when he prepared for ordination ; such were the thoughts which still inspired him when, a year after taking priest's full orders, he gave up all he possessed to the Franciscan order and assumed the brown cowl and sandals. Truly, by that time there was no more in him of rancour, as men usually understand rancour. He prayed morning and night that Angèle might be happy, but the General of his order had rightly divined that his wound was not healed, and that the sentiments he cherished towards his faithless love, generous as they might seem to men, would to the scrutinising eye of God appear vindictiveness, and petty vindictiveness, too. It is not enough that we should pardon those who wrong us ; we must so pardon as to make the forgiveness easy and comforting to receive.

Brother Euphrasius understood this after the fatherly chiding he had received from his superior ; but he could not cease to love, and so long as his love retained any earthly element it must remain mixed with human resentments. You had only to look at the young friar to guess how much he must have suffered from a love wound. He had large, dreamy eyes of wondrous softness. There was a feminine delicacy in his features, in the gentleness of his voice, in the quiet polish of his manners ; and his tastes from childhood up had always been those of a scholar and gentleman. He had never been a ferocious soldier. Foremost in the fight, he had also been foremost after battles in rendering kind offices to the conquered. Foes and friends spoke well of him ; and those who knew him best confirmed by their praises the intuitive appreciation of those who liked him at first sight.

But Euphrasius was weak—how weak only he himself knew as night after night, in his lonely cell, he tried to banish the thought of Angèle from his mind and could not. There were moments when the perfume of flowers she had worn came back to him with a sense of voluptuousness. He sometimes started out of sleep breathing her name and thinking he was walking with her ; and there were other gloomy times when, in his disturbed slumbers, she appeared to him with a tearful face and hands clasped as if she were in sorrow and wanted his help. Of course he knew nothing of what Angèle was doing. She had been married some years now, and in the secluded Norman monastery where he resided no news of the outer world ever penetrated. Euphrasius spent his days in prayer and study. He was permitted to learn the Chinese language, and diligently did so, but without knowing whether his application to be enrolled as a missionary would ever be granted. The Father Superior purposely kept him in ignorance on this point. A whole year passed and Euphrasius did not again prefer his request, nor did the Father Superior himself allude to it. But the young friar was learning patience at a good school, and gradually, as he devoted himself to his books, his mind grew calmer and his spirit was soothed. He began to see his position in a clearer light, and, understanding that this earthly

life is a short one, to feel that the other and better life beyond this is worth striving for at any cost.

About eighteen months after Euphrasius had confessed himself to his Superior as above recorded, the Father entered his cell one day and abruptly said, "Euphrasius, are you still in the same mind about going to China?"

"Yes, Father," was all the young friar could say, but he turned crimson.

"Then you shall go and spend a few months at the Foreign Mission College in Paris, where you will be instructed in your duties. Be a good servant of the Church, my son."

"I will try, Father."

"I would not make you vain, Euphrasius," continued the old man, laying a kind hand on the young man's shoulder, "but remember that you are one of those to whom much has been given and of whom much will be required; the trials that will be sent to test the fortitude of other missionaries may seem no trials at all to you; but you will have your temptations too. God tries each according to his strength, but not *above* his strength, recollect that."

"Father, if I am to die in my work, let your blessing be with me," said Euphrasius as he knelt down.

"I do not think you will die, my son," said the Superior when he had given his blessing: "presumptuous as it may seem that I should try to predict the ways of the Almighty, I yet do not believe that He will take from you a life for which you appear to care little. I have a presentiment that I shall see you again."

"May you be satisfied with my work when I next meet you, Father."

"I believe I shall be, Euphrasius," said the old man; "I must not grudge you the confidence you deserve. I look upon you as one of the elect upon whom God has set his seal for the most difficult of labours that are to be performed here below. Go, striving to be worthy of your election, and come back to me with peace in your heart!"

Brother Euphrasius had certainly peace in his heart at that moment, as he listened to the exhortation of a man whom he revered; and he went to Paris that day with a thankful mind.

II.

While Euphrasius was preparing himself for the career of a missionary Angèle de Rosenheim was leading a by no means happy life in Paris. Little as the desolate monk suspected it, she loved him as deeply as he did her; and she had suffered as much as he from this love, though her pangs were of another kind. In her case there was remorse and the bitter humiliation of feeling that she was despised for her mercenariness. Poor girl, she had never given a thought to money matters so long as she herself had been concerned; but there had been heavy trouble in her

family on account of a scampish brother, and she had been compelled to sacrifice herself for this scapegrace. Angèle's father, the Count de Montcroix, was a squire of no very large estate, who enjoyed an honourable competency, but nothing more. He had two children, and had so husbanded his resources that he hoped to give his son a good start in life and to provide his daughter with a satisfactory dowry. But Philippe de Montcroix, Angèle's brother, was a weak-willed spendthrift, who, from the day when he got a commission in a cavalry regiment, started at a gallop down the road to ruin. He ran into debt, and had to be paid out again and again. First his own portion was swallowed up, then his sister's; after this the Count had to mortgage his estates to meet another disgraceful scrape. At last, there came a day when Philippe de Montcroix, in order to obtain money which his father could no longer give him, committed an offence which might have brought him within reach of the criminal law. He had to be saved once more, and the only way to do this now was by his sister making a rich marriage. The Baron de Rosenheim, the Count's banker, who had seen Angèle and admired her, declared himself at this juncture and proposed for the girl's hand. He had heard of Philippe's scrape, and with considerable delicacy he advanced the Count a large sum of money without any security at the very moment when it was needed. Angèle, for her father's sake and her brother's, responded to this generosity by consenting to become the Baron's wife; and when the marriage settlements were drawn up shortly afterwards, the banker cleared all the mortgages off her father's property, gave her penitent brother a fresh start in life by sending him as managing agent to a cotton plantation in Louisiana, and settled a million of francs on Angèle herself.

It was under these circumstances that Angèle had to meet Henri de Garderoy when he returned from the Crimea. Her love for him had never abated a moment; on the contrary, it had expanded till it filled her whole being and tortured her. How handsome he looked on that day when he came back to her, having heard nothing of her unfaithfulness! How brave, how knightly and trustful, as he held her hands which for a moment she had not strength to withdraw from him, and gazed rapturously into her eyes! . . . But she had to tell him what had occurred, and she did so at length without faltering. Nor would she accuse any but herself. Having chosen her own part, she had the fortitude to take all the blame on herself; she did not disclose her father's and her brother's trouble; and not a word escaped her to show that she looked upon her coming alliance as a sacrifice. Her husband's honour was now to be her own, and she would not suffer him to appear odious or ridiculous in any man's eyes. So when Henri, in the paroxysm of his despair and anger, flung at her the words, "Jilt! you have sold yourself for money!" she answered: "I shall at all events be the faithful wife of a man whom I admire and esteem"—and this she had said with an apparently cruel calmness.

But it had been an awful scene, and the recollection of it would sicken her whenever her mind dwelt upon it in after time. Her marriage took place, and she went to reside with her husband in the latter's splendid Parisian mansion. Then came the news that Henri de Garderoy had thrown up his commission to become a priest, and this added another weight to Angèle's load of secret misery.

For she had been hoping and praying that he might forget her. Some may think that women never make such wishes in real earnest, but always derive some consolation from the constancy of those whom they have wronged. Angèle de Rosenheim, however, had not wronged Henri in wanton caprice, and it was essential to her peace of mind that he should be cured of his wound and become happy. Two children were born to her within the first three years of her marriage; and if she could have seen Henri married too, she might have found rest, and have lived content in her children's and husband's love. The Baron was a kind, affectionate husband to her; and he was also a genial, honourable man, whose upright character she esteemed, and whose many amiable qualities she loved. Not for worlds would she have done anything to pain him; and she had jealously kept from him all knowledge of her engagement to Henri. The Baron had never so much as heard Henri de Garderoy's name pronounced by her.

For all this Henri stood like a shadow between him and his wife. Angèle could not forgive herself for having, as she thought, ruined the life of her lover. She understood but too well the implied rebuke to her own mercenariness which was conveyed in his utter renunciation of all worldly goods, and the censure upon her marriage which he expressed in his own vows of eternal celibacy. But now that he was a priest and monk she sometimes thought that she could bear to tell him the whole truth under the sacred seal of the confessional. She would be wronging no one if she disclosed to a priest that which his lips dared never reveal; indeed, she had perhaps failed in her duty by not making full avowals to the priest of her parish whose confessional she ordinarily attended. If she could only have ascertained where Henri was! . . . If she could have thrown herself at his feet in some lonely convent chapel and have obtained from him his double absolution as a man and as a minister! . . . Unfortunately, monks cannot easily be found by those who have known them in the outer world. The regulations of monastic orders are expressly framed to guard against such rencounters. Even if Angèle had been able to ascertain in what monastery and under what name Henry de Garderoy was living it would have been useless for her to try and seek access to him. The Father Superior would suspect her of wishing to disturb the young friar's peace, and would tell her to carry her confessions elsewhere. This Angèle knew well enough, and nearly six years elapsed after the marriage before a mere hazard—if there be such things as hazards—brought her face to face again with the man who had parted from her in such furious and just anger.

One morning, when Angèle had been breakfasting with her husband and children, the Baron, looking at his watch, said, "I shall not go to the office just yet, for I expect the visit of two monks, brothers of the Church Mission, who are coming to me for my yearly subscription."

"How much do you give?" asked Angèle, whose attention was not yet quite awakened to the subject.

"A thousand francs generally."

"And do the monks always come for the money themselves?"

"Yes, it's their rule, I believe. The Superior of the Missionary College writes to me that the two friars whom I expect are going to China, and will take my subscription towards their expenses from our hands, 'and'—as he adds—'leave a blessing on our house.'"

"Does the Superior say to what Order these monks belong?"

"Yes, Franciscans—Brother Babolinus and Brother Euphrasius," saying which the banker smiled.

Then Angèle was silent. She knew that Henri de Garderoy had become a Franciscan, and a hot flush rose to her face. Her two children were standing beside her—the one a bright boy of five, the other a blue-eyed little girl of three. Angèle, to hide her face from her husband, stooped and kissed them; and it was at this moment that a servant coming in announced that there were two friars below.

"Show them up," said the Baron, and next minute the pair were introduced. A gloomy pair, sandalled, cowled, with knotted ropes round their waists, whose aspect made their children cling closer to their mother's dress, and whose sad garb formed a striking contrast to the luxuriousness of the banker's furniture, and to the wealth of silver and china displayed on his table.

Angèle herself was beautifully attired in a grey silk *peignoir*, trimmed with pink satin and lace. Her beauty was then in its prime, full of youth, sweetness, and matronly dignity. Nevertheless, her face was blanched of all colour, and her eyes were almost haggard, as she rose to her feet on recognising Henri de Garderoy. Henri, too, knew her at once, and stood as if transfixed near the door. He had thrown back his hood, and his thin, pale face, surmounted by his shaven crown and small fringe of brown hair, looked like that of a man risen from the grave or descended from the picture of a saint. For a moment his wan cheeks became tinged with pink, and a flash, vivid as lightning in the night, shot through his eyes. But he promptly remembered his vow of humility, and with lowered glance and arms folded, stood motionless, though his head swam.

Poor Euphrasius! this shock had come upon him more heavily for being unexpected. He had gone out with his brother, Babolinus, in obedience to his Superior's orders; but as it was Babolinus who had to collect the money, Euphrasius had not asked where they were going. Monks do not converse with each other in the streets, and Euphrasius

had entered two houses before this one without knowing, or indeed caring, who the owners were.

Luckily for him it was Babolinus who did all the talking, and very expert he was at the work, for he was a friar of the jocose order. Not all the abstemiousness of convent life, or its rigid discipline, had been able to freeze the source whence his good humour flowed in a limpid stream. He fasted as much as other monks, prayed like them, toiled like them, but he was always cheerful; and he had been ordered now to go out to China because men like himself, bubbling over with the milk of human kindness, make precious missionaries. "Monsieur le Baron," he said, advancing with a smile as he held out his collection bag, "we come as wayfarers thanking you for paying the expenses of our journey."

"You are going to China?" said the Baron, dropping a bank note into the bag. "It is a long voyage and a dangerous country, eh?"

"Danger exists everywhere; but we live through them somehow," answered the cheerful monk. "May your path and those of your lady and children be free from them."

"Thank you," said the banker; "when do you sail, brother?"

"In about a week."

"And your young friend here is going with you?"

"Yes, we are to be companions. Speak up for yourself, Euphrasius."

Up to this moment Angèle, who stood with heaving breast, had said nothing. Her children were clinging to her as if frightened, and she could find no words to reassure them. She was trembling, and felt ashamed, for as her eye wandered from Henri—oh how changed from former times!—to the finery around her, she thought she could read what was passing in his mind. There was he barefooted, clad in serge, and wasted by long privations, whilst she revelled in rich attire and plenty. She wished she had been clothed in rags sooner than in these rustling stuffs which seemed to mock his utter poverty. Where would be the use of kneeling at his feet now to make her shrift? Would he ever believe in her repentance now that he had seen her apparently in the full sunshine of domestic bliss, and her husband giving alms to him?

But the banker was speaking to Euphrasius.

"Dear me, sir," he said, "it seems to me that I have met you before. You remind me strangely of a brave young officer whom I once knew very slightly, Henri de Garderoy."

"Such was my name once," replied the young monk in a low voice.

"What, the hero of the Redan? And now you are a monk! Well, I won't say there's anything amiss in that; but yet I hope, brother, you have not been banished from the world by sorrows?"

"I have never felt any wish to return to the world," was Euphrasius's evasive answer, and the banker, feeling he had been indiscreet, desisted from further questions. But at that moment Angèle intervened.

"My brother, let your blessing rest on my children," she faltered, gliding forward, and holding her children by the hand.

"God's peace be upon them!" said Euphrasius, lifting three fingers of his hand, but still speaking very low and avoiding Angèle's glance.

"And on me, brother, and on my husband. . . ."

"And on you, lady, and on your husband," continued the monk gently.

Angèle had sunk to his knees and lowered her head. When she raised it the two friars were already gone, and it was her husband who assisted her to rise.

"Fine fellows those monks," he said, wondering a little to see his wife so much moved, but attributing the fact to the magic which ecclesiasticism exercises over the female mind. "Fancy, though, a captain of dragoons turning friar! I suppose some girl jilted him; it's an old story."

III.

Our scene now is in a Chinese village called Seiho-Tchín. A missionary station was established there, with its church, its school, its dispensary of medicines, and its hospital. Brother Babolinus was the nominal director of these institutions, but the real, active manager of them all was Euphrasius, who had more energy, culture, and knowledge of the world than his senior. He had found Seiho a wilderness, spiritually speaking; in two years he had raised it to a condition of prosperity, happiness, and order which made it enviable in the sight of surrounding Chinese communities.

One man may work wonders when there breathes in him a sacred fire. Euphrasius had practically converted the whole population of Seiho to Christianity, and in doing so had stripped them of many prejudices which kept them backward in the management of their worldly affairs. He taught them improved methods of agriculture, enterprise and honesty in trade, cleanliness, sanitary laws; he made them desirous of useful knowledge, and instilled into them all sorts of ideas tending to their general enlightenment. His school was crowded with children; his dispensary and hospitals helped to stifle in the germ many of those fearful epidemics which are continually decimating the Chinese population; and in his church, Sunday after Sunday, he addressed large and eager congregations who marvelled at his facility in speaking their language. Brother Babolinus had never been able to master the Chinese tongue, but Euphrasius spoke it so well that his usefulness as a missionary had the fullest scope.

Of course, however, he had his trials to bear, for his work was by no means easy, and the good which he could achieve, slowly and laboriously, by an exercise of untiring patience, was often compromised by the hostility of natives who were not settled within his parish. Petty officials, who were sent to rule the village, frowned at the spread of Christianity, and would often try to persecute the converts; provincial governors laughed at the schools, disapproved of the hospital and endeavoured to

rouse popular fanaticism against the pharmacy, as being a dispensary of devilish drugs. Alone with Brother Babolinus in a hostile country, two hundred miles away from the nearest European settlement, Euphrasius had to cope with these difficulties and dangers as he could; but his very weakness was in some way a protection to him, and on the whole he got on very fairly till a fellow-countryman of his, a certain Monsieur Rigobert, came and settled in the village as a general dealer in European wares, a cook, publican, fiddler, dentist, surgeon, and performer of conjuring tricks.

This Rigobert was not at all a bad fellow, so far as heart and intentions went. He wanted to make money, and would have been content to make it honestly so long as this was possible. A small, crop-headed, dapper little fellow, nimble as an ape, garrulous as a magpie, and always smiling; he boasted a hundred talents, and would never scruple to lay claim to a hundred others which he had not got. He could draw a tooth deftly, but he would also undertake to cut off a leg, which was not so much in his line. He had a smattering of astronomy, but he pretended to divine the influence of the stars on human events; he sold genuine goods so long as he had any, but when his stock of such was on the decline, he had no hesitation in palming off pinchbeck and shoddy at the same prices as substitutes. This unprejudiced genius had tried all sorts of trades in France without much success, and had at last gone out to China as cook on board a merchant-vessel. But being horribly seasick on board, he had vowed that he would not set foot on a ship again till he had earned money enough to justify his travelling home as a first-class cabin-passenger. Hearing that a Christian settlement was flourishing at Seiho, and that an "opening" existed there without competition for a man of enterprising turn, he had started off with a stock of mixed goods—also a fiddle, a concertina, and a box of conjuring implements, including an inexhaustible bottle, out of which he lost no time in dispensing liquor to the natives. This marvellous proceeding had its due effect on the Chinese mind, and in a very short time, by dint of his fiddling, conjuring, quacking, and fortune-telling, Monsieur Rigobert became a popular character in the village, and began to feather his nest pretty snugly at the expense of the Celestials.

Unfortunately, Rigobert's influence, as soon as it was definitely established, did not work to the ends which Euphrasius and his comrade Babolinus were pursuing—much the contrary. Rigobert had at first settled under the missionaries' protection, begging them respectfully to befriend him; but as soon as he could shift for himself, he proceeded to set up what he was facetiously pleased to call a "constitutional opposition." He left off going to church on the ground that he was a free-thinker, and amused himself by indoctrinating the minds of his Chinese customers with republican and materialist ethics, "because," said he, "the clergy ought not to have things entirely their own way." In all this Monsieur Rigobert intended to be funny rather than mischievous;

to tease the missionaries rather than to grieve or damage them, but he did not know the country in which he was living, and one of the earliest results of his fooleries was to breed schism in the village. All the most cunning and worthless characters, who found Euphrasius's spiritual yoke too heavy, became customers of M. Rigobert's drink shop, and imbibers of his doctrine. Then the silly fellow added a roulette-table to his other attractions, and opened a regular casino, where drunkenness and gambling ran riot, terminating not unfrequently in fights and murder. Thereupon, the native officials found an excuse for saying that "these Christians" (for they confounded the good and the bad together) were fomenters of discord and trouble; and by way of showing impartiality between what they termed the two "sects," they fell into the habit of bamboozing two or three well-behaved converts every time that a like number of Monsieur Rigobert's friends had deserved punishment.

All this was a heavy trouble to Euphrasius and Babolinus, but their expostulations with their raffish fellow-countryman were of no avail. Babolinus had tackled the man jovially, appealing to his sentiments as a good fellow, and urging upon him that Frenchmen ought to make common cause in a foreign land so far from home; Euphrasius had remonstrated more severely, pointing out to Rigobert that he was guilty of criminal folly which might lead to bloodshed, in which case a weighty responsibility would rest upon him.

"You know," said he, with something of military peremptoriness, "how jealously we are watched here as strangers. We can only hope to remain unmolested by leading the most blameless lives."

"Well, brother, I am leading an honest life enough," grinned Rigobert, not in the least put out. "You have your doctrines and I have mine, and we each practise what we preach."

"Pooh, man, don't talk to us of doctrine," laughed Babolinus. "I suppose these are your doctrines," and he pointed to an empty row of bottles that had been filled with a devilish sort of whisky distilled from rice.

"Before you came here there was not a drunken man in the village," continued Euphrasius; "and now, it seems, you have set up a private still. The streets are filled with noise every evening, and your customers come yelling the songs you have taught them under our windows."

"That shows they are enjoying themselves, brother."

"Enjoying themselves in drinking poisonous spirit, losing their money over your gambling table, fighting with each other like dogs, and then being flogged by order of the mandarins? Is that your idea of making people happy?"

"I don't think we are likely to agree, brother, as to what constitutes happiness here below or hereafter," replied Rigobert good-humouredly. "You try to keep people in the straight path by threatening them with everlasting fire if they go wrong; I preach to them the more genial

philosophy of making the best of this life, seeing that they know little of that which is to come. You speak to your friends as if they were babies; I treat mine as if they were my equals in common sense, and I impart to them all the opinions which I have myself formed in France."

"Well, one of these days you will rouse up against you these poor misguided creatures, whom you will have taught to obey no moral law, and the end of it will be that we shall have riots and perhaps massacres here."

"Oh, as to that, brothers, I promise you that if there be a riot you shall come through it unscathed. I may assail your theories, but I never speak otherwise than with respect of your person. Were you attacked I should stand by you, and not one of my friends would touch a single hair—among the very few which you sport on your heads." This being an allusion to the monks' tonsures, seemed to Monsieur Rigobert a happy stroke of wit, and put him in high good-humour with himself as the two friars retreated, sorrowing and angered at his obstinacy.

The interview had taken place outside the door of Rigobert's general store and casino, a now flourishing establishment which the Frenchman carried on with the assistance of half-a-dozen native servants. The outside of it was gaudily painted and adorned with lanterns which by night made a flaunting blaze, and during the day there were generally some loafers hanging about the tables set at the doors to drink of the fiery liquors which the Frenchman sold. If custom was slack, Rigobert would take up his concertina or fiddle, and the lively tunes he played generally had the effect of bringing flocks of Chinamen to his doors. After the visit of the monks, Rigobert deemed it prudent to indulge in a little music, just by way of showing the public that the lecture he had been receiving from the friars had had no effect upon him at all, so he struck up the *Marseillaise*, and the triumphant strains of this air followed the two monks as they made their way back dejectedly to their school.

Whenever he entered his school-room—a large, gay place ornamented with maps and religious prints, and full of happy children—Euphrasius felt comforted for many of his troubles. He knew that he was doing good here. Some of the older boys and girls were already advanced enough to act as pupil-teachers, and the educational work was being carried on in a way which exceeded the most sanguine anticipations which the missionaries had formed at first. Babolinus chiefly busied himself in the hospital and dispensary, and it was on Euphrasius that the care of the schools devolved. He was largely assisted by an intelligent girl of fifteen, and by her brother a year younger, who had both been brought up in a European house at Shanghai, and who spoke French well. The girl's name was Loling, but in christening her Euphrasius had called her Angela, and her brother, Lao-Tsen, he had baptised Angelo. They were both good children, proud of the good work in which they had been admitted to share, and earnest in seconding Euphrasius, whom they loved as a father.

But, in christening these two young assistants by the name of the woman whom he had so deeply loved, Euphrasius had surely proved that he still thought much of Angèle de Rosenheim? Indeed he did, and at times he thought of her very bitterly, though always with a love unquenchable. His sudden interview with her at her own house, when he had seen her so richly clad and living amid so much luxury, had left a tormenting impression on him. He had not noticed the yearning look that was in her eyes when she gazed upon him. He had only noticed her beauty, her attire, her lovely children, her husband, who looked so prosperous and happy by her side; and he had thought that she was entirely happy too. Well, he wished her to be happy. . . . On his conscience he desired nothing but her good. Yet the meeting with her had been hard. A humble, starveling monk, coming into her house as a beggar—that is what he had been—and his wounded vanity suggested the idea that he had looked mean and ridiculous, just such a figure as a woman might congratulate herself on not having married.

One day, speaking in his usual chaffing way to the monks, Rigobert had said: "You have your ambition as well as I, my masters. I want to become rich; you, I daresay, dream of bishops' mitres, cardinals' hats, and perhaps of the papal tiara." Euphrasius had had no dreams of the kind. It had never entered his head that he could become a bishop, but he did wish to do something that would make Angèle think of him with admiration. Here was what he conceived to be a laudable ambition when he was left to himself and had no Superior to read his conscience and to chide him. Unfortunately for him, he lived in China, under no spiritual domination at all beyond that of his own conscience. Brother Babolinus did not know enough of his friend's affairs to act as his adviser, nor was he the sort of man to act as a close dissector of consciences. The two monks confessed their sins to each other, but Babolinus looked upon his younger comrade as a saint, and would sometimes say to him, half in jest, half in earnest, "If you were to be killed out here, brother, the Court of Rome would canonise you in fifty years' time."

To be always praised is not good for any man; and there came a time when Euphrasius almost got to think himself near to human perfection. He did not say to himself that he was perfect; but sounding his conscience for sins, he could find none, and in his confessions to Babolinus he had to fall back upon trivialities. Thus he lapsed into a mood of unwitting self-justification and praise. He felt that he was working with his whole heart, denying himself, and doing his best generally to serve God; and he wondered somewhat querulously why Heaven had raised up such an obstacle on his path as Monsieur Rigobert. Had Heaven, then, no interest in the work he was achieving? Was it nothing to have rescued souls from infidelity? and were his labours as an apostle to be thwarted at every step by a rogue who was scattering sin around him broadcast?

Babolinus, perceiving how impatient Euphrasius grew at Rigobert's misdeeds, tried sometimes to offer consolation, and in so doing spoke in a truer spirit of Christian philosophy than his friend, though it was far from his intention to speak in a tone of reproof. "Brother, our work must not be made too easy for us," he used to say, "else we might despise it, and perhaps undertake more than we can satisfactorily perform. So long as this wolf is amongst us we shall not be tempted to abandon the sheep of our little flock, and this, perhaps, will be a mercy to them."

"Everything was going on so well before he came," muttered Euphrasius mournfully.

"And everything will go on well though he is here. Assuredly an occasion will come for worsting him. Let us remain patient in our work, and we may be judged worthy of sharper trials than any that have befallen us yet."

"Would that some sharper trial would come!" exclaimed Euphrasius fanatically; then, becoming aware of his presumption, he added humbly, "if strength be vouchsafed us to meet it. What I mean, Babolinus, is that this man seems too mean a foe to cope with. It is like wrestling with a viper, and wasting one's time and strength over it, when one has gone out to meet lions."

"Patience, brother! we shall encounter our lions in time," replied the elder monk.

"I wonder how soon," answered Euphrasius, with a faint smile.

"Oh! soon enough for me," said Babolinus, laughing. "I only hope I may not be like the prophet who met the lion in the way, and was slain outright, without any fighting on his part, from what I can make out."

The lions—that is, the sharp trial which Euphrasius had invoked—did come, but not in the manner, or at the time, when the young monk had expected.

Once a month an *estafette* used to come from the nearest European settlement, bringing letters and parcels from Europe to Seiho. One day, in fine spring weather, the courier arrived whilst Euphrasius was busy with his classes in the school, and Babolinus presently came running into the schoolroom, flourishing a large open document with a seal to it.

"Father! father!" he cried, and, with tears of joy starting to his eyes, flung himself at his friend's feet, "let your first episcopal blessing rest on me, monseigneur!"

"What means this?" inquired Euphrasius amazed.

"The Holy Father has constituted Seiho into a see, and appointed you its first bishop," answered Babolinus, still on his knees. "I may say now, like Simeon, *Nunc dimittis*, and rejoice that this has been in part my doing, though we shall, alas! be separated."

"Why should we be separated?" asked Euphrasius. Then, when he had laid his hands on his friend, and assisted him to rise—when he had also appeased the tumult that had arisen in the schoolroom by dismissing

all his cheering, hallooing little pupils for a half-holiday (after they, too, had clustered round him for a blessing)—then he sat down, in considerable agitation, to read the instructions that had been forwarded to him from Rome along with his letters of appointment. The documents stated that, owing to reports which had come to Rome (they could only have been sent by Babolinus) of Euphrasius's zeal, courage, and piety, owing also to the success of his labours as a missionary, it had been resolved to appoint him bishop, and to send out twelve new missionaries to Seiho to undertake parish work under his directions. Meanwhile—that is to say, as soon as these missionaries arrived—the new bishop was to delegate Brother Babolinus as his coadjutor *pro tem.*, and to proceed to Rome for his investiture and for further orders. On his return to China he might, if he deemed it expedient, take out an additional staff of missionaries and school-teachers with him, so that the new Christian vineyard which he had planted in what had once been a wilderness might not suffer from want of labourers.

“And it is to thee I owe all this!” exclaimed Euphrasius, quite overcome and embracing Babolinus in a transport of gratitude. “But what possessed thee to send such reports in my favour without informing me?”

“Because I knew you would not have written in your own praise,” answered Babolinus with an honest laugh. “For all this is your doing, brother—these schools, this church, could not have risen above ground without you; and yet, I confess, I did not think my words would so soon have borne fruit. The Holy Father has paid me a great compliment in believing me thus readily.”

“The bishopric should have come to you, Babolinus. I could well afford to wait,” said Euphrasius, sincerely meaning what he said.

“No, Father; I am an old man, having none of your genius, and I should have made a poor bishop.” Then, with a good-humoured twinkle in his eye, “But now, Father, you will be better armed against the lions than I, for you will have a crozier to defend yourself with.”

“What lions?” asked Euphrasius absently.

“Why, the lions who were to relieve the monotony of our existence—the lions who were to come under the form of new trials to test our strength and faith.”

“Ah! yes,” answered Euphrasius as absently again, and he did not smile at the joke.

He had just taken up a bundle of the newly-arrived French papers, and, in the first journal which he opened, his eyes had lit upon a paragraph announcing that the Baron de Rosenheim had been raised to the rank of senator by the Emperor Napoleon. Between this promotion of Angèle's husband and his own rise Euphrasius saw no connection whatever, for he believed Babolinus to have been the sole author of the good fortune that had befallen himself. But the Baron's rise did cause him a slight pang. At such a moment he could have better borne to keep this man out of sight. A senator was a greater man than a bishop, and

Angèle was less likely to be amazed at her first lover's new dignity if her husband held a dignity still higher. Euphrasius felt, during a few unworthy moments, like a man who is being constantly distanced in the race of life by a rival, and it required some effort on his part to shake off this feeling. However, his new position had so far modified his sentiments about the future that he no longer cared so much to encounter new trials in China. In another month the new missionaries would be coming out, and he should set his face towards Rome. To Rome! He longed to perform this journey. He had in his mind's eye a vast scheme for the proselytizing of China, the which, if favourably entertained by the court of Rome, would open up a boundless field for his energies, and make his name ring far and wide among the bishops of Christendom. Then, if the martyr's crown came it would be welcome; for he could go feeling that he had left a deep seal of his presence on this earth, and, possibly, made some impression too on the woman who had misunderstood him and slighted him for money.

Poor Euphrasius! his ambition would have been cruelly curbed if he could have known that he owed his bishopric mainly, if not solely, to the untiring efforts which Angèle and her husband had made with the French Government and with the Vatican on his behalf. The kindly offices of the good Babolinus would have gone but a small way towards getting him a mitre.

IV.

It was some two or three months after this that tidings reached Europe of a new and treacherous massacre of Christians by the Chinese. It was reported that a popular rising had taken place at Seiho-Tchín; that the missionary church and schools had been burned; that two hundred native converts, including children, had been put to the sword, and that the newly-appointed Bishop of Seiho, along with Brother Babolinus and twelve lately disembarked missionaries, had also perished, after having been subjected to horrible tortures. That was the first account that arrived—an account which made Angèle de Rosenheim's blood run cold when she read it in a newspaper which her husband banded to her. For several days the poor lady mourned over her martyred lover with an anguish all the more terrible as she had to keep it secret. But then intelligence came that the Bishop of Seiho had not been killed—that, in fact, he alone had survived the general massacre. And with this news was flashed the story of how the Bishop had owed the preservation of his life to the fact of his having evinced such a sublime courage as had shamed his persecutors into admiration of him. He had been put to torture, his limbs had been racked, his feet and hands had been thrust into the fire, and molten lead had been poured upon him; but though these barbarous cruelties had been carried on for three days, no recantation could be wrung from him, so that at length his tormentors let him go with his life out of sheer wonder and respect. By-and-by ampler

details arrived from the pens of newspaper correspondents at Shanghai, and it appeared that the catastrophe at Seiho had been brought about through the misdoings of the publican Rigobert. A party of Chinamen, having lost their money over that man's roulette table one night, swore that they had been robbed, and commenced destroying the furniture of the casino. The publican drawing a revolver to protect his property, there had been bloodshed, after which the rioters set fire to the casino, and then a cry had arisen of "Down with the Christians!" The missionaries rushing out to render assistance in extinguishing the fire that had spread to some cottages, were either slaughtered out of hand, or taken captives and put to death subsequently in tortures. Meanwhile the murderers, drunk and infuriated, had pursued their work of extermination by going from house to house and slaying all the native converts who refused to trample on the crucifix. Some two hundred men, women, and children had thus died, confessing their faith; and of the European residents not one had escaped, save the Bishop. Rigobert, the author of the mischief, had perished with the rest.

These horrible tidings came to France at a moment when Parisian society had not much to talk about. It was in 1865; Europe was quiet, and the Second Empire in its heyday. Society having no wars or political sensations to distract it, was in a humour to give its undivided attention to a story which made every Catholic lady thrill as she read it, and which drew even from hardened cynics on the Boulevards the confession that the age of dauntless martyrs was not gone yet. When it was known that Monseigneur de Garderoy (as he was now called) was on his way back to Europe, and would probably come to Paris after passing through Rome, public curiosity was stimulated in a marked degree; when it was reported at length that the stout-hearted Bishop had actually arrived in Paris, every man and woman who had perused the wondrous record of his life became eager to see him and hear him preach. It was soon announced that the Bishop would appear in the pulpit of Notre Dame, and the chapter of this cathedral was worried with applications for reserved seats from all persons holding any social position by reason of their rank, wealth, fame, or name. Martyrs are not common in these times, though the race be not extinct; and to see a man who had actually gone through the ordeal of flame and rack for his convictions was an attraction indeed. Moreover, this Bishop was not a priest of the common sort, who had been bred in seminaries, knew little of the workaday world, and would scarcely be expected to address cultivated laymen in language they would understand; he was an ex-officer, who had won honour in the army, and whose name was still remembered with pride in his old regiment. Scores of his former comrades were among those who wanted to get into the cathedral to hear him, feeling sure that the words which fell from his lips would be of a sort to stir them like trumpet notes.

If such were the sentiments of the public, one may imagine what

were those of Angèle de Rosenheim. She had spent some days in sickening sorrow, while she thought Henri de Garderoy dead, and afterwards she had pored, with streaming eyes and a throbbing heart, over the narrative of his heroism and endurance. When he returned to France, she resolved that she must see him at any hazard. To be despised of such a man was more than she could bear. If only for his own sake, that he might think no worse of human nature, as he had known it, than it actually deserved, she must tell him that she had not deserted him for the sordid motives which he had imputed to her. After that she would be at peace with herself, and she would be enabled thenceforth to see him face to face without fear, and to think of him without sin.

For some days Angèle hesitated as to whether she should not relieve herself of her heart's burden by seeking an interview with Henri at once. But she learned that he had gone "*en retraite*" into the Franciscan monastery of Caen, where he had spent the first years of his monkhood; so she was fain to wait until he should return to Paris, to preach his promised course of sermons at Notre Dame. The Lenten season was approaching, and it had been arranged that the missionary Bishop should preach in the cathedral, in aid of the foreign missions, on every Friday throughout Lent. But first he was to preach a Sunday sermon, in the private chapel of the Tuileries Palace, before the Emperor Napoleon, the Empress, and Court. This was by the Empress's special desire, and invitations to the mass and sermon were issued by Her Majesty's Chamberlain as for a Court reception. As a senator, the Baron de Rosenheim obtained one for himself and his wife; and a few days before the solemnity the Minister of Public Worship, accosting the Baron in the lobbies of the Senate, congratulated him on the signal manner in which Monseigneur de Garderoy had justified the encomiums which M. de Rosenheim had passed upon him, in recommending him for a bishopric:—"Your *protégé* has done wonders, Baron," said the minister. "When we first proposed him at Rome for the mitre he was thought a little young even for a bishopric *in partibus*; but now we are holding a French bishopric in reserve for him. He is thirty-five, is he not?"

"I believe so. My wife used to know him when he was in the army, but that was before her marriage, ten years ago."

"Exactly; and he was a captain when he left the service. Well, the bishopric of St. Cloud is vacant, and I am sure we shall be satisfying the public wish if we appoint him to it. But there are other dignities in store for him. After his sermon on Sunday, the Emperor will give him the commandership of the Legion of Honour, and appoint him one of the preachers in ordinary to the Court. I daresay, in time, Monseigneur de Garderoy will become an archbishop and cardinal."

"And perhaps after that Pope," said the Baron with a smile.

"Perhaps Pope," laughed the minister. "If he were an Italian instead of a Frenchman, his chances would be considerable; at all events, he wants no friends to help him now."

No ; the Bishop of Seihō no longer stood in need of patrons. Even poor Babolinus, had he been still alive, would have added little to the general testimony as to his friend's greatness and goodness. How high his name stood in men's estimation, Henri de Garderoy could measure for himself when he returned to the Franciscan monastery, which he had left rather more than three years before. Modern monks are no flatterers. The mere elevation of their old comrade to a bishopric would not have been sufficient of itself to compel their respect ; but before the steadfast missionary, before the martyr, they bowed down with startled loving reverence.

The old Superior, who had said to him at parting, "I have a presentiment that I shall see you again, Euphrasius," knelt down to crave his blessing, and faltered as he did so. "God be praised that I read your destinies aright, Monseigneur. I felt that if your life was spared, you would only live to Christ's glory."

"Don't call me Monseigneur," said the Bishop, taking the old man's arm and leading him away. Call me 'son' once more, and conduct me to my old cell."

"Your cell ; nobody has occupied it since you left," said the Superior. "You will find it just as it was. Does it bring back happy memories to you, my son ?"

"Very happy," answered the Bishop with a sigh. "Memories as of childhood. My conscience was almost at rest here ; at least so it seems to me now."

As he uttered these words almost inaudibly the Bishop entered the small cell so bare of furniture, and sat down at the little table where he had spent so many hours in study. Then it was that the Superior had a good full view of his features for the first time and recoiled at the alterations which he noticed in him. Henri was no longer attired in monkish habit, but in a priest's black cassock, with the violet buttons which denoted his rank, a cassock which added to the thinness of his appearance. He had allowed his hair to grow, and it was all grey. One of his hands—the left—was in a sling, the other was covered with a black glove which, on being removed, disclosed fingers and palm all scarred with the marks of scorching. But what affected the Superior even more than these fearful traces of physical suffering was the look of unutterable melancholy stamped on the Bishop's features. It even seemed to him that a strange expression, almost as of fright, had crept into the Bishop's eyes. These eyes no longer had the steadfast, unquavering glance as of yore. The light of youth had gone out of them, nay, it looked almost as if hope had fled from them too. Occasionally they opened wide and gazed for a moment with a horror-stricken expression into space, then suddenly closed, as if the vision they saw was too shocking to be borne.

"Oh, my son, how you must have suffered !" exclaimed the Superior clasping his hands.

"It is over now," muttered the Bishop hoarsely. "They are in Heaven now."

"They? Your companions, you mean; poor Babolinus and the others, and your little school children. Yes, certainly they're in Heaven."

"They died so nobly," murmured the Bishop, as if he were speaking to himself. "Little children of six and seven, with their mothers, who refused to trample on the crucifix to save their lives, and as they were weltering in blood they called on the name of Christ."

"What faith!" ejaculated the Superior with emotion. "And to think, my son, that it was you who planted it in the bosoms of those women and children who are now with the angels."

"But Rigobert died well too," cried the Bishop, proceeding with his soliloquy. "Oh, yes, right well, like a man." Then a shudder passed over him. "You have heard of Rigobert, Father? He was the publican whose conduct led to the massacre. Well, they brought him a crucifix and said to him, 'Spit on it,' not doubting that he would. He refused. They forced it to his lips, and he kissed it. 'I shall not buy my life by debasing myself at your bidding. Besides, my old mother used to pray to the crucifix, and I kiss it for her sake.' Those were the words which this publican and sinner uttered, and died for them. Can you realise that, Father?"

The Bishop had raised his voice, and now stood up with a flashing glamour in his eyes, and a shiver shaking his whole body. The Superior trembled to see him in such agitation, and endeavoured to soothe him. "Be sure, my son, that God has had mercy on this unhappy man, and received him as He did the penitent thief."

"Yes, I believe that," faltered the Bishop; "but oh, Father, if you could know what is on my mind," and burying his head in his hands he burst into tears, and sobbed, not like a child, but with the appalling grief of a man.

It was evident that his nerves had been wofully shaken by the crucial torments which he had undergone, and the monks were all desirous of ministering to him during his stay among them. But the Bishop would not let himself be cared for. He sojourned for a fortnight in the monastery, leading the same life as the friars, eating of their food and joining in their labours, and by degrees a certain amount of composure was restored to him. But often he would walk alone in the garden of the monastery, pacing with feverish strides, and talking to himself as it seemed to those who observed him; and if he happened to encounter the Superior after one of these walks he would eye him wistfully, and open his lips as if he had something to say. One day he went so far as to murmur, "Father, I must make my confession to you," but then he suddenly checked himself, and when the Superior gently encouraged him to speak, he repelled these advances suspiciously, almost roughly: "No, I must be a man, and not conjure up phantoms to scare

myself with," he said, and his stay at the monastery came to an end without his having taken the Superior into his confidence.

"I trust he leaves us in better health than when he came," remarked the old man as he saw him depart. "But surely God has tried his very heart and reins. I would not have thought that physical torments could have wrought such a change in any man. Holy Mary! how he must have suffered!"

V.

The Sunday had come when the Bishop of Seiho was to preach before the Court. The frivolous society of the Second Empire had its gayest and fairest representatives packed in the handsome but small chapel of the Tuileries, where scarcely standing room could be found for statesmen, senators, and foreign ambassadors who were crowded into all the corners. The Emperor was present, ensconced in his arm-chair, and stroking his moustache with a reflective look; the Empress was there too, and the Prince Imperial; and the Empress, with a true Spaniard's fervour, leaned forward and signed herself as the martyr-bishop passed her, preceded by the verger, on his way from the altar to the pulpit.

It was a solemn moment enough; and as the preacher arose to speak there was a perfect hush as in a room where the dead are lying. Not a man or woman was there among that brilliant worldly-minded congregation but felt that this man who stood up before them so awfully cadaverous in appearance had earned the right to say to them what things he would. In this age of limp convictions, of bantering scepticism, of self-seeking compromises, in this age of effeminate luxuries, of striving after riches, comforts, and amusement, this priest had endured the tortures of hell sooner than sacrifice his personal dignity or deny his faith. And he had thus suffered not ostentatiously in the sight of thousands ready to applaud his fortitude, but obscurely, in a dark corner of the world. That his heroism had become manifest, and had been proclaimed on the house-tops all over Christendom, was a mere matter of chance, for it might well have happened that he should have died of his wounds and passed away from men's minds, leaving no record behind of what things he had suffered, bequeathing no example to his contemporaries and to generations yet unborn.

But God had not willed it so, and there he stood a living memorial of faith and strength—a teacher from whom men and women of all conditions were bound to take a lesson.

The sovereign, the statesman, the soldier, the woman of fashion, nay, the very priests who had performed the church service were bound to ask themselves whether the objects they pursued in life were worth striving after at the cost of such pangs as that martyr-bishop had undergone; and again they had to ask themselves whether there were any of the tortures among the many which he had endured which they would be content to suffer for the vindication of such opinions as they

held. Possibly there were some statesmen present, turncoats ; some generals, traitors *in posse* ; some journalists, apostates ; some ladies, hardened offenders, who resented the Bishop's moral superiority, and inwardly hoped that in his sermon he would commit some blunder which would "bring him to earth again," and prove that he was no genius and hardly a gentleman. But if so these people were mistaken. It is not easy to preach before a Court, so many are the things that must be left unsaid, but Monseigneur de Garderoy acquitted himself of his duty better than any preacher had ever done before in that chapel.

He spoke from the text, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do," and having the work of the Church missions in view, he dwelt on the services which the propagation of the Christian faith was rendering to the world. Taking that faith from its cradle he showed what it had done, and tried to prophesy what it would do. Then by rapid transitions (for he knew that he would bore his hearers if he spoke for more than half-an-hour) he came to the drama which had been enacted at Seiho, when women and children, almost babes, had died, confessing their Redeemer, and of these he gave a stirring picture. Of himself he said nothing except in this one sentence : "When my own turn came for being put to the proof, I felt how little I was beside those women and children." Thereupon a long murmur of sympathy ran round the chapel. It was felt that this man who had survived his tortures had really suffered much more than those who had succumbed under theirs ; but Henri de Garderoy checked the outburst that was declaring itself in his favour by waving his hand and crying firmly : "God sends us no more sufferings than we can bear. The endurance of physical pain is a question of temperament, but the touchstone of courage is the willingness to die—to take that plunge into the dark abyss of eternity about which we know so little, but which yet frightens us all."

Thereon he concluded his sermon ; and the collection bags that were sent round in aid of the Church missions were filled with bank notes and gold.

The congregation broke up and filed into the apartments of the palace. Here the Bishop presently appeared, led by one of the Almoners in Ordinary, to make his bow to the Emperor before going away. Napoleon III., with the Empress and the Prince Imperial by his side, approached the Bishop and flung the collar of the Legion of Honour Commandantship round his neck, then thrust his letters of appointment as Bishop of St. Cloud into his hand, saying, "Monseigneur, we shall all remember your sermon."

The Bishop bowed profoundly, but made no reply. Then he turned to leave, and the whole throng of statesmen, courtiers, and fair women bent low before him as he went out. If ever there was a man who could have tasted at that moment the full cup of bliss resulting from earthly triumphs it was Henri de Garderoy.

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Yet a few hours later the Bishop was sitting alone and miserably brooding in a small room of the Church Mission College in Paris. It was here that he intended to lodge during Lent whilst he delivered his sermons at Notre Dame. All the priests and neophytes in the college were ready to worship him as a living saint who would assuredly be canonised hereafter; but to one and all he showed a stern face and would tolerate no homage. He was sitting alone in his room, at seven, having supped off a crust of dry bread, when a young monk entered and announced that a lady wished to see him. At the same time he handed a card bearing the name of the "Baroness de Rosenheim."

"Show her into the chapel, and have the chapel lighted," said the Bishop; and for a few minutes he stood resting his chin in his hands and meditating, whilst a series of flashes, quick and wild, passed through his eyes and over his features.

Now had come the hour of his greatest triumph on earth, Angèle was going to kneel at his feet.

He doffed his black cassock and put on the richest ecclesiastical vestments which the college could afford—a surplice bordered with lace, a golden cope, an albe of satin embroidered with pearls, and a mitre. Then he descended to the chapel; and as he entered saw a woman lying prostrate, in deepest abasement, with her brow on the altar steps.

An hour later Angèle had made her full confession to Henri de Garderoy, and he lifted up his hands to give her episcopal absolution. Then of a sudden he took off his mitre and laid it at her feet, saying in a tone of unimaginable energy: "And now I have to make my confession to you, Angèle. Listen to me, and I will tell you what I have told no living creature before."

"No; you are going to accuse yourself falsely," cried Angèle starting back in terror at the expression on his countenance; "tell me only the truth, Henri, once and for all; let us have no secrets."

"There shall be no secrets," replied the Bishop with an awful sob. "You think I am a martyr, Angèle, but in the hour of my trial my fortitude gave way, and I trampled on the Cross! I wished to see you once again; I could not bear to die. Rigobert, the publican, let himself be killed; I, the Bishop, recanted. I defiled the crucifix, and escaped with my life because my persecutors despised me. What do you say to that?"

"How you must have loved me!" exclaimed Angèle thrilling all over.

"Yes, I did love you and do," murmured the Bishop still on his knees; "but now tell me what I am to do, for I know not?"

"Love me to the end," said Angèle, "but with a better and purer love than before. Love my children and husband, and remain among us to preach to us the sad trials of the weak, and the hopes that remain to them when they have been tried above their strength."

"I could have had no peace, Angèle," said the Bishop with a despair-

ing groan, "if I had thought that you continued to think of me as better than I am. Your husband is a nobler, honester man than I, and I wish you to feel it."

"I love you better than ever," answered Angèle, clasping her hands, "but our love can be that of a sister and brother. Is your conscience clear now?"

"Not yet, till I have confessed to the Superior of the Franciscans, and to all others who have looked upon me as a hero. I must confess my infamy everywhere."

"No," replied Angèle ecstatically, "you must not cause scandal in the Church. You have confessed to me, let that be enough. So bear yourself in future that you shall have nothing more to confess. I give you absolution."

And the woman laid her forgiving hands on the head of the kneeling Bishop.

“At Home” to the Poor.

Few people, I imagine, realise the extreme dulness of the lives of the poor. Cut off from the many interests which education or the possession of money gives, they have little left but the “trivial round, the common task,” which indeed furnishes them with “room to deny themselves,” but is hardly, in their case, at least, “the road to bring them daily nearer God.”

“People must be amused,” is the caricatured statement of a true human need, and the terrible and often deplored attraction of the public-house has its root not so much in the love of strong drink as in the want of interest and desire for amusement felt by the lower classes of the poor. This is especially true with regard to the women and those men who cannot read. Unable to comprehend the ever-living interest of watching public affairs, prevented, by ignorance, from following, even in outline, the actions of the nations, they are thrown back on the affairs of their neighbours, and centre all their interest in the sayings and doings of quarrelsome Mr. Jones or much-abused Mrs. Smith.

It is difficult for those of us to whom the world seems almost too full of interests to realise the deadening dulness of some of these lives. Let us imagine, for an instant, all knowledge of history, geography, art, science, and language, blotted out; all interests in politics, social movements, discoveries, obliterated; no society pleasures to anticipate; no trials of skill nor tests of proficiency in work or play, to look forward to; no money at command to enable us to plan some pleasure for a friend or dependent; no books always at hand (the old friends waiting silently till their acquaintance is renewed, the new ones standing ready to be learned and loved); no opportunities of getting change of scene and idea; no memories laden with pleasures of travel; no objects of real beauty to look at. What would our lives become? And yet this is a true picture of the minds of thousands of the poorer classes, whose time is passed in hard monotonous work, or occupied in the petty cares of many children, and in satisfying the sordid wants of the body. In some cases precarious labour adds the element of uncertainty to the other troubles, an element which by the fact of its bringing some interest, is enjoyed by the men, but which adds tenfold to the many cares of the housewife.

It is not easy to see how the poor themselves can get out of this atmosphere of dulness. They can hardly give parties, even where the cost of entertaining would not be the chief barrier, the extreme smallness of the rooms entirely prevents social intercourse, not to men-

tion such obstacles as the children having to be put to bed in the course of the evening, and all the many discomforts consequent on the one room being bedroom, parlour, kitchen, and scullery. But even supposing there are two rooms, or few children, the difficulties of entertaining are not yet over. With minds so barren, conversation can hardly be the source of much amusement, and music and dancing are almost impossible with no instrument to help and no space where even the little feet can patter.

But it is possible for the ignorant as well as the cultured to enjoy Nature. And it is often a subject of wonder why the poor living in such close streets or alleys, surrounded with such unlovely objects, do not take more trouble to get out into the country or enjoy the Parks. "Only sixpence, you say," said a hard-working pale body to me one day, when I was urging her to go on one of her enforced idle afternoons to get air and see some refreshing beauty at Hampstead. "Well, yer see, I could hardly go without the three children, and that's 1s. 3d., besides they'd be a deal hungrier when they come home than perhaps I could manage for."

What could be said to the last argument? Just fancy having to consider, otherwise than pleurably, the increased appetite of one of our young ones fresh from a day by the sea or in the country?

But apart from the money question, after a time the desire to go into the country wears off, even among those who have before lived in pure air and among country sights and scenes; they get used to their dull sordid surroundings: the memory of fairer sights grows dim, and the imagination is not strong enough to conjure them up again.

"Shure, I ain't been in the country this fifteen year," an old woman once startled me by saying at a country party; "and if it hadn't been for your note 'ere it would ha' been another fifteen year afore I'd ha' seen it."

And she was not so poor, this old lady; 7s. a week, perhaps, and 2s. 6d. to pay for rent. It was not her poverty which prevented her seeing the fifteen fair springs which had passed since she came from the Green Isle. No! it was just the want of power to make the effort—a loss to her far more serious than the loss of the sight of the country. As the late James Hinton used to say, "The worst thing is to be in Hell and not know it is Hell;" perhaps the best thing one can do for another is to give him the glimpse of Heaven, which, letting in the light, shows the blackness of Hell.

"Don't you think green is God's favourite colour?" asked an old lady, the thought suggested as we stood together in a forest of soft green. "Well, I can't say," was the answer; "look at the sky, how blue that is." "Yes, but that isn't always blue, and the earth is 'most always green."

Does it not seem a pity that this old poet soul, so fit to teach God's lessons, should live all through the summer days in one room, shared by

four other people, seeing only the mud colours of London, which certainly are not God's favourite colours. It was this same old lady who said to me, on receiving our first invitation, "All the years I've lived in London I was never asked to go into the country before you asked me."

But the want of pleasure and change is no newly-discovered need of the poor. School-treats and excursions and bean-feasts have been organised and carried out almost since Sunday schools have existed and congregations had a corporate life. Every summer sees the columns of the newspapers used to ask for money to give 900, 1,000, 2,000 children "one day in the country," and the money obtained and the day arriving, the children are packed into vans or a special train and turned into the woods or fields to enjoy themselves (and tease the frogs) until tea, buns, and hymns bring the "'appy day" to an end. Good days these, full of pleasure and health-giving exercise, but perhaps mixed with too large an element of excitement to teach the children to enjoy the country for its own sake, to enable them to learn in Dame Nature's lap "that we can feed this mind of ours in a wise passiveness."

Neither have the clergy overlooked this need as existing among their grown people; and most of those working in poor neighbourhoods organise an annual "Treat," each person paying, say, 1s., to be met by the 6d. from the Pastor's fund. These treats sometimes assume the enormous proportions of 2,000 or 3,000 persons. All take their mid-day meal to be eaten when and how they like. The assembling for tea, and a few speeches by the rector and those in authority, are the only attempts made to bring the people together, and to introduce the sense of host and guest. And with the memory of the 1s. paid, this sense is very difficult either to arouse or maintain. But good as in many ways these treats are, they do not do all they might. They do not introduce fresh experiences, an acquaintance with other lives, the interest of new knowledge.

We receive but what we give,
In life alone does nature live,

as Coleridge puts it; and such sadly empty minds want the interpretation of the friendly eye to make them see what they "went out for to see."

Struck with these ideas, we determined to try another method of entertaining our neighbours; and believing that they had the same need of social intercourse as the rich, and taking for granted that the kind of country entertainment most prevalent among the rich was the one most enjoyed by them, we based our parties on the same foundation, remembering always that the minds of the poor being emptier, they needed more active entertainment, and that the party to which we invited them was perhaps the one day's outing in the whole year, the one glimpse that they had (apart from divorce suits) into the lives and habits of the richer classes.

On talking over our plan with friends who, living in the suburbs of

London, had the necessary garden, it was not long before we received kindly invitations to take thirty, forty, fifty, of our neighbours to spend the afternoon in the country. The day and hour fixed, it was left with us to decide which guests should be invited, and to pass on the invitation. Sometimes our hosts particularly wish to entertain children as well as grown people; and if so, we include the children in the invitation; but on the whole, after much experience, we find that those parties are most thoroughly enjoyed when the children are omitted. This will not be misunderstood when it is remembered that these mothers and fathers have their children, perhaps seven of them, all small together, constantly with them for 365 days in the year, both day and night; that the children become noisy and excited in the country, and that each child's noise, though it may be music in the ear of its mother, can hardly be anything but what it is, *disagreeable sounds*, in the ears of its mother's neighbour. Another objection to the presence of the children is the extreme difficulty of entertaining them and the grown people together. To other parties it is not the rule to invite children with their parents, and the same rule holds good here.

It is not difficult, knowing (as my husband's duty here leads him to know) many people who would be glad of a day's outing, to pass on such invitations; but it is pleasanter, if it can be so arranged, that the guests should beforehand be acquainted with each other. For that reason it is better to invite together the members of a mothers' meeting and their husbands, the *habitués* of a club, the inhabitants of one block of buildings, the denizens of a particular court, the singing-class, the members of any society who worship, work, or learn together; in short, those who unite for any purpose. There are other advantages in this plan besides the obvious one of the guests being already acquainted. Those who have hitherto seen each other's character only from the work point of view now get another stand-point, and the day's pleasure together, with the hearty laugh, and the many-voiced songs, does more than many a pastoral address can do, to teach forgiveness and break down barriers raised by quarrels—quarrels which as often owe their origin to close neighbourhoods than bad tempers. "Now she ain't such a bad 'un as one would think, considering the way she behaved to my Billy—is she now?" is a true remark illustrating what I would say.

The guests chosen, the invitations go out in the usual form: "Mrs. So-and-So," mentioning our hostess's name, "hopes to have the pleasure of seeing Mr. and Mrs. So-and-So on Monday, 14th, to spend the afternoon in the country," and then follow the time of the train and the name of the station where the rendezvous is to be held. Added to these the friends of other classes connected in any way with the expected guests, the district visitor, the superintendent of the mothers' meeting, the lady rent-collector, are also invited; as well as those who either have gifts of entertaining or to whom we wish to introduce our neighbours. We generally choose a train between one and two o'clock, thus enabling the

man to get a half-day's work and the woman to see to necessary household duties and give the children their dinner before she starts.

On reaching the country station we ramble through the lanes, picking grasses and flowers, taking if possible a detour before arriving at our host's house. "Why, the *trees* smell," exclaimed one town-bred woman in almost awe-struck astonishment, standing under a lilac-tree. "Don't it make one feel gentle-like?" was another remark made more to himself than to me, which came from a rough one-legged board-man, as he stood overlooking a quiet, far-stretching scene near Wimbledon.

Unless one has lived in close streets and amid noise and grinding hurry, it is difficult to understand the pleasures of these walks. The sweetness of the air, the quiet which can be felt, the very fact of strolling in the road without looking out to avoid being run over, is a relief, and the absence of the ever-present anxiety of the care of the children is a great addition to the irresponsible enjoyment of the day.

Our destination reached, it is a great help if the host and hostess will come out to meet and welcome us, as is customary towards guests of other classes. By this simple courtesy the tone is at once given, and the people feel themselves not brought out to a "treat," but invited and welcomed as guests. I have seen men among whom we were told when we first went to Whitechapel it was not "safe" to go alone, entirely changed by the bearing of their hosts to them, and the determination, with which they set out, to have a "lark," at whatever inconvenience to others, gradually melt away under the influence of being treated as gentlemen. "Why, she said she was glad to see me," said one rough fellow, taking as a personal compliment to himself the conventional form of expression.

The duty of introducing and welcoming over, we are glad if we find tables on a shady lawn or under a tent ready spread and waiting for us. In the excitement of getting off, the midday meal taken hurriedly has probably been a slight one, and the walk and unwonted fresh air have given good appetites. Sometimes our hostess has made arrangements that all the party should take their food together, and this is the better plan if it can be managed. "Why, the gentry is sitting down with us. Now I do call *that* comfortable like," I overheard on one occasion when this arrangement had been followed. If the one class waits on the other it but emphasises the painful class distinctions so sadly prominent in the ordinary affairs of life, and the feeling aroused in the minds of the people as they see the richer members of the party taken by the hostess to the house to have "something to eat" is not always amiable; the "something" being interpreted by them as better, anyhow different from that provided for them, or why should it not have been taken together.

The repast given by our many kindly hosts during these eight summers of parties has been various. Some add eggs and bacon to the tea and cakes; others give a large joint, which is even more enjoyed, a

cut off a good 14lb. sirloin of beef being a rare luxury in the ordinary dietary of the working classes, while others again offer us tea, differing only in quantity from the ordinary afternoon meal of which we partake between our luncheon and dinner. Some of our hosts give us every variety of cake, such as Scotch housewives delight in making, though I remember one lady who, while most kind and anxious to give pleasure, told me, as if it were an additional advantage, that she had "had all the cakes made very plain, and that they were all baked the day before yesterday."

The meal over, the real pleasure of the day begins, and this must entirely depend on the capabilities of our hostess for entertaining and the possibilities of the garden. If it is large, there is nothing town-people like better than to saunter about, to wander in the shrubberies, to see the hot-houses, conservatories, fernries, especially if some one will be the guide and point out what is interesting, this spot where the best view is to be obtained, that curious flower, and tell the story hanging on this queerly shaped tree. "Aye, aye, ma'am, it's all very beautiful, but to my mind you're the beautifullest flower of the lot," was the spontaneous compliment elicited from a weather-beaten costermonger to the stately old lady who had taken pains to show him her garden, and though the remark was greeted with shouts of laughter from the surrounding group, the "Well, he ain't far wrong, I'm sure," showed that the words had only spoken out the thoughts of many.

Sometimes the men go off to play cricket or bowls, to see the puppies or horses, or some other beasts particularly interesting to the masculine mind; or perhaps the interminable game of rounders occupies all the time. Sometimes swings, see-saws, or a row on the pond are great amusements. "Oh dear, I think I've only just learnt to enjoy myself," gasped one buxom woman of fifty, breathless with swinging her neighbour, whose face told that her life's holidays could without difficulty be counted, while, to a few, the fact of sitting still and looking out and feeling the quiet, is pleasure enough. "I seem to see further than ever I saw before," murmured a pale young mother, sitting on the Upper Terrace at Hampstead, and as she said it she looked as if the sight of the country just then, when her eyes were reopened by her new motherhood, might, in another sense, make her see farther than she had ever seen before. If the garden is small and its resources soon ended, games must be resorted to, and such games as "tersa," where running and motion are enjoyed; the "ring and the string," when eyes and ears must be on the alert; or "blow the candle blindfold;" all cause hearty fun, especially when the unconscious blindfold, having walked crooked, energetically blows, as he thinks, at the candle, which is still burning steadily half a yard from him. On some of these occasions the hostess has had her carriage out, and by taking four or five of the guests at a time, all have been able to have a short drive, and to see from a higher elevation something more of the country. "Well, I don't know that I was ever in a

carriage before," said one woman, who could hardly be said to have been in one then, as she dismounted from the box. "Except at funerals," corrected her neighbour. Might not some of the extraordinary liking, which is so common among the poor, for attending funerals, be partly for the sake of the rare event of a drive? Occasionally it is possible to get up a dance, with the help of a fiddle or piano, and many a pale, worn face has lost, for the time at least, its stamp of weariness, as it grew interested in the ups and downs of "Sir Roger de Coverley." "Bless me, if I ever thought to do any dancing, except the dancing of babies," was an unusual comment from my partner on one occasion; and many times have I since been referred to to confirm the fact that "You did see me dancing, didn't you, ma'am?"

Besides these active pleasures, we must not forget to mention music, the love and appreciation of which is so deep and warm in these uncultured minds; music which more than anything smoothes away class as well as other inequalities. I have seen rough low-class men and women leave their active games or the swing for which they had been waiting, and cluster round the singer or musician begging for another and yet "another bit." What they like best is a song with a chorus, or recitative songs where they can hear the words, and next to these solemn music on an harmonium or organ, but any music charms them, and the hostess, who is either musical herself, or who invites her musical friends to help her, finds the task of entertaining much easier. An oft-repeated mistake is that the poor like comic songs about themselves, and "Betsy Waring" has been suggested and sung at our parties more often than I can remember. A moment's sympathetic thought will show, however, that the poor want other and wider interests, and it can hardly be the kindest method of amusing them to sing them a song the joke of which lies in imitations and "take-offs" of their mispronunciation. It is, too, I know, generally thought that the uneducated cannot appreciate what is commonly understood as "good music," but this is a mistake. Long years ago, I remember Mrs. Nassau Senior coming to see our night-school of rough girls, held in a rough court. That evening some street row was more attractive than A B C, and our scholars were clustered around the heroine of the fight. I can still see the picture made by Mrs. Senior as she stood and sang in the doorway of the school-room, which opened direct on to the court, and among such surroundings it was a deep-sighted sympathy which led her to choose "Angels ever bright and fair." For long afterwards she was remembered as "the lady who came and sang about the angels, and looked like an angel herself."

It is well if the hostess can bring her instrument to the window, so that the people can hear as they sit on the lawn outside and enjoy the air; perhaps she may find it possible to ask two or three of her guests who can sing, with strong, sweet, though untrained voices, to join her in a duet or glee, and helping, they enjoy the pleasure with the helper's joy.

Occasionally one of the party may have brought an accordion with which to aid the impromptu concert, or some one will recall the piece of poetry committed to memory long years ago, and then we can have a recitation, which pleases none the less because it is "Jack Straw's one bit," and has been heard a few times before. If it be wet or windy the hostess may ask her guests into the drawing-room. "You did not see the drawing-room, did you, mum?" asked one of my neighbours after a party which I had been obliged to leave early; "it was lovely, and we all sat there quite friendly like, and listened to the music. I *did* like the look of that room." Very pregnant of influence are these introductions into a house scrupulously clean and tastily furnished—a house kept as the dwelling of every human being should be kept. Do we not know ourselves, if we go to visit a friend with a higher standard of art, morals or culture, how subtle is the influence; how from such visits (albeit unconsciously, or at least hardly with deliberate resolve) is dated the turning towards the new light, the intention to be more perfect?

One lady, with the real feeling of hostess-ship, took her Whitechapel guests, as she would any others, into a bedroom to take their outdoor things off. Touching, if amusing, was the remark of a girl of fifteen or thereabouts, who, turning to her mother, said, "Look, mother, here's a bed with a room all to itself." "Has any one really slept in this white bed?" was asked by another of that same party. While to others of rather a higher class who have been servants before marriage the re-introduction to such a house is a great pleasure, though to them not such a revelation as it is to those who have passed all their lives in factories or workshops. It is a welcome reminder of their past, and often suggests little improvements in the arrangement of their homes. It is a means also of diffusing a love of beauty, a sense of harmony, and an artistic taste, not to be despised among those who feel that not the least attraction of all right living which leads to righteousness is the attainment to the "Beauty of Holiness."

In various ways, too many to describe, but which every hostess can devise, the hours between half-past four and eight can be pleasantly filled, until the drawing in of the long summer evening brings the party to a close. The announcement of supper is generally greeted with, "What, go home already?" or, "The time don't go so fast working days," but garden parties must necessarily end with daylight, and for folk up at six, ten or eleven o'clock is a late enough bed hour. Supper is generally a small meal—cake, buns, or pastry, with lemonade, fruit, or cold coffee—simply a light refreshment taken standing; but some, however, of the friends who entertain us like better to give the light meal first, when the guests arrive, and the more substantial one later. The first plan, though, I think, is better, as the people leave their homes early, and many of them miss their dinner altogether, amid the necessary preparation for the long absence.

"Good-night, sir, and God bless you for this day," was the farewell of one of his guests to his silver-haired host, words which struck him deeply. "Dear me, dear me! why did I never think of it before?" he exclaimed, and really this means of doing good seems so simple and self-evident that it is to be wondered at that those working among the poor should often not know where to take their people for a day's outing. London suburbs are crowded with families perhaps not one of whom does not give a garden party in the course of the summer, and yet how few of these parties are to guests "who cannot bid again"! The expense of giving such a party is certainly not the reason of its rarity. An entertainment such as I have told about, even when meat is given, does not cost more than eighteenpence or two shillings a head. The trouble cannot be the deterrent motive, for that is nothing to be compared to the trouble of a dinner-party, nor even of an ordinary "at home." "The servants would not like it," is, I know, sometimes urged as a reason, but it is certainly not the experience of those who, having overcome the objections of their servants, have tried it, and found that they entered thoroughly into the spirit of a party at which they had the pleasant duty of entertaining joined to their usual one, that of serving. On more than one occasion I can remember the hearty welcome given by the servants adding much to the success of our day. Perhaps, amid the many difficulties to which modern civilisation has brought us, one of the saddest is the mutual ignorance of the lives and minds of members of the same household—an ignorance often leading to division. It may not, I think, be the least important good of these parties that they afford a subject regarding which master and servants can be anyhow for one day of one mind and purpose. Neither does it require the possession of a mansion or park before such an invitation can be sent; in fact, some of our pleasantest parties have been given in the smallest gardens, where kindness and genial welcome made up for want of space. One lady, indeed, who was staying for the summer in lodgings in the country, gave happy afternoons and pleasant memories to more than forty people. She asked them in little groups of twelve or fourteen, took them long country rambles, or obtained permission to saunter in a neighbour's garden, and when the evenings drew in (it was in August) they went back to her rooms, where a good tea-supper and a few songs brought the entertainment to a close.

The guests need not always be grown people. It is perhaps even more important to give the growing girl, or the boy just entering into manhood, a taste for simple pleasures. Very delightful is the interest and enjoyment of these young things in the country life and wonders. The evening sewing-class, consisting of big girls at work all the day in factories; the Bible class of young men; the discussion club; the children-servants (so numerous and so joyless in our great cities); little groups can be found around every place of worship, or are known to every one living among or busying himself for the good of the poor. All

are open to invitations, and these can be entertained even more easily than their elders. "Don't you remember this or that?" my young friends often ask about some trivial incident long since vanished from my memory, and when, demurring, I ask "When?" the unfailing answer is, "Why, that day when you took us into the country. You *can't* forget. It was grand."

Strangely ignorant are some of these town-bred folk of things which seem to us always to have been known and never learned. They call every flower a rose, and express wonder at the commonest object. "Law! here's straw a-growing!" I once heard in a corn-field, and emerging into a fir-wood soon after, we all joined in a laugh at the remark, "Why, here's hundreds of Christmas trees all together." Anything, provided it is joined to active movement, without which young things never seem quite happy, serves to amuse and pass the time. A competition to see which girl shall gather the best nosegays; the proposal to the boys to search for some animal, queer plant, or odd stone, has helped to carry us over many miles and through long afternoons. Perhaps one of the nicest things which any young lady can do, even if she is not able or allowed to attempt the larger undertaking of a party, is to take some ten or twelve school-boys and girls for a walk on their Saturday afternoon holiday. She need keep them, perhaps, only three or four hours, when milk or lemonade and buns, got at any milk-shop, will serve as a substitute for the usual tea.

But, besides these country parties which town-dwellers are quite unable to give, there is still left to us Londoners the possibility (not to say duty) of inviting the poor to our own houses. We have not been asked to many such parties, but the few at which I have been present have been very pleasant. At one our hostess, but lately returned from the East, had arranged *tableaux-vivants* introducing Oriental costumes in her drawing-room, and the guests were delighted at seeing the people of the one foreign nation of which they knew anything—the Bible having been the literature which made them conversant with that—as large as life, and all "real men and solid women." Another time a little charade was got up, and proud was the mother whose baby was pressed into early service as a play-actor. Other friends have entertained us after a visit to the Kensington Museum or Zoological Gardens, whilst some evenings we have passed much as other people do who meet for social pleasure: with talk, music, strange foreign things, portfolios, and puzzles, though we played games, perhaps, rather more than is usual among guests with more conversational interests. To all of us have these parties given much pleasure—pleasure which is, in truth, helpful and refreshing amid the sorrow and pain so liberally mingled in the life's cup of the poor. "This evening I've forgot all the winter's troubles," followed the "Good-night" from the lips of a pain-broken woman; and considering the "winter's troubles" included the death of a child and the semi-starvation resulting from the almost constant out-of-work condition of the husband,

the party seemed a strangely inadequate means of producing even temporarily so large a result.

The efforts made to attend is one of the signs of how much these and the country parties are enjoyed. One woman I remember coming with her puling, pink, ten-days-old baby, and both men and women constantly get up from a sick-bed to return to it again as soon as the pleasure is over. "We can't afford to lose it, yer see, they don't come too often," is the sort of answer one usually receives in reply to remonstrance.

But this paper will accomplish its object if "they do come oftener," and if not only the poor of our big London, to whom we owe special duties, but if the poor of all great cities are more thought of in the light of guests.

The duty once recognised, the method becomes plain. Every one, even those whose work does not take them among the poor, can manage to be introduced to some who are leading pleasure-barren lives. To employers of labour in factories or trades it is especially easy. The introduction made, the rest follows naturally, and though pleasure is in itself so great a good that I would hold the thing worth doing if this alone were obtained, yet I think a prophet's eye is not needed to see the other possible good resulting from such gatherings. The wider interests, the seeds of culture, the introduction to simple pleasures, the suggestion of ideal beauty, the possession of happy memories, the class relationship, are the advantages one can rapidly count off as accruing to the entertained, but not more important are they than the lessons which the rich, coming face to face with the poor, learn as their entertainers. In them they see patience which puts their restlessness to shame; endurance about which poems have yet to be written; hope which is deep and springing from the roots of their being; charity which never faileth, including, as it often does, the adoption of the orphan child, or the sharing of the room with a lone woman, and compared to which the biggest subscription is as nothing; kindness, which though unthinking, spareth not itself. Each class has its virtues, and, as yet, they are unknown to each other. It is for the rich to take the first step towards knowing and being known; it is for them to say if the class hatreds, which like other "warfare comes from misunderstanding," shall exist in our midst. It is for them to make the way of friendship through the wall of gold now dividing the rich and the poor. It is for them to give fellowship which, crushing envy, takes the sting out of poverty. And all this can be done by spending some thought, a little money, and one afternoon in being "At Home" to the poor.

Great ends these to follow the small trouble and expense of a garden party. It will not, though, be the first time in history that good has been done by means which seemed contemptible, and it will not seem strange to those who have learned that it is a life and not a law—friendships and not organisations which have taught the world its greatest lessons.

HENRIETTA O. BARNETT.

Franz Grillparzer.

SOME time during those years in which Byron was devouring his *immortel ennui* at the feet of the Countess Guiccioli, he met with the Italian version of a drama by a young and little known German. He read it with enthusiastic admiration, expressed in his usual incisive manner and with little affectation of nice criticism, in a letter to Moore; and prophesied that the author would not long be unknown. "His name is hard to pronounce, but posterity will learn to pronounce it." The drama was *Sappho*, and the author, one Franz Grillparzer, was, in fact, to be found in that great seat of cacophonous names, Vienna. Perhaps some stirrings of a purely personal and peculiar feeling may have mingled in the admiration with which the poet of the North who had steeped his genius most profoundly in the slough of worldly passion, re-read the story of the poetess, most akin to him of all the Greeks, who, though in a very different way, had attempted the same perilous transition from poetry to life. If she had the agonies of rejection, he had the languors of satiety; and the leap from the Leucadian rock suggests in a manner the fatal fevers of Missolonghi. But whether or not such feeling helped to decide his verdict, posterity, for nearly half a century after, can scarcely be said to have confirmed it. No doubt it found his name too difficult. Translations of *Sappho* were indeed published in most European countries, and in the United States; and the mere fact that an Austrian work was, within ten years of the Congress of Vienna, translated into Italian, is in itself a considerable testimony to its celebrity at the time. But his subsequent dramas attracted little attention in non-Teutonic countries, and most of them scarcely passed out of Austria. Indeed, the note of provinciality is so powerful in almost all, that it was easy to overlook the undoubted existence there of a metal bearing no local image and superscription. In Austria itself, too, the poet began to be forgotten; others, such as Hahne, the author of *Griseldis*, delighted the Viennese by a versatility which Grillparzer could not claim. His last published play, an attempt to force the region of comedy to which nature had denied him the key, awakened only the laughter of derision; and he retired, still in the prime of life, into a seclusion which was undisturbed. Some twenty years later the tide began to turn. In 1858, Heyse was one of the first to speak of him with high appreciation. Since then, and more especially since his death in 1872, his plays have become increasingly popular on the Viennese stage, and it was slowly recognised that, in the words of his friend and biographer Kuh, "he had been the first to

understand the heart of the Austrian people." Nor is this mere *Vaterländerei*. Germany, too, always a little inclined to ask what good thing can come from Vienna, has shared the movement, and one of Grillparzer's most highly romantic dramas, *Der Traum ein Leben*, has lately had a brilliant run in Berlin. It appears, therefore, worth while to give a brief account of Grillparzer, together with a description in some detail of his most famous and, on the whole, most perfect drama, *Sappho*.

His outward life is not eventful. Born in the Bauernmarkt of the Old Town of Vienna, January 15, 1791, he passed through the usual school and college course without extraordinary distinction, though now and then—and it is highly characteristic—passing all his competitors at a bound when accident brought him some task suited to his peculiar faculties. At the siege of Vienna, he joined the citizen corps of defence; and, if we may judge from the naïve admissions of his Autobiography, he had not much more of the warlike temper than poets in general. "I was not timid, nor was I brave." In fact, he holds a sort of mean place between the Archilochus' and Horaces and the Sidneys and Byrons, between the poets who throw their shields away and the poets who fall. His first drama, *Die Ahnfrau*, written a little later, in 1811, but not performed before 1817, made an extraordinary impression throughout Germany. This was partly—and many who read its dismal pages will suspect that it was entirely—due to its concurrence with a popular taste. In effect, if not in intention, it belonged to that class of so-called fate-tragedies (*Schicksal-Tragödien*), in which Adolf Müllner had led the way with his ominously named play *Die Schuld*, and Tieck, Werner, and other minor romantics had followed. The fate-tragedy is, as its name suggests, a combination of a highly tragical subject with a fatalist motive. It is a romantic perversion of a classic type, by which the most revolting crime assumes an air of divine legality. The tales of Œdipus and Thyestes, classic as they may be, had an attraction not hard to understand for a school of which one side was represented by the "seraphic immorality" of Schlegel's *Lucinde*; and which, on another side, tended to throw the burden of personal individuality, if not upon fate, at least on Rome. Grillparzer, however, was far from sharing these tendencies; he merely adopted for a moment the form they had inspired, and fiercely rejected the accusation of fatalism which the contemporary critics brought against him. The annoyance of this controversy led him, in his second drama, *Sappho*, to abandon the thorny region of romantico-classic and material-spiritualist abortions for the idealised humanity of Goethe. A further account of this drama, however, we reserve. In 1820 he travelled in Italy, and contrived to embroil himself with the Catholic party by some stanzas which, with rather too daring an enthusiasm, exalted the ruins of old Rome at the expense of the new Rome risen out of them. The fruit of this journey was the trilogy of the *Golden Fleece*, in which the whole compass of the fable, from the landing of Phryxus to the revenge of Medea, is set forth

with no small effect. It was, however, much found fault with by the Viennese critics, and the poet has in fact impressed his own personality so thoroughly upon it, that those who will have no *Medea* but that of Euripides or Apollonius, are at once offended. Partly perhaps in consequence of this, he now broke into an entirely new domain, the historical drama. If Goethe had been his master in *Sappho*, if he listened above all to his own genius in *Medea*, *Ottokar's Glory and End* aimed at the realism and variety of Shakspeare. It had a very great success on the stage, and cool critics did not hesitate to compare the first act with the best dramas of literature. "Shakspeare would have thrown up his cap at that act!" said the imaginative Danish poet, Hebbel. Its success was, however, in a certain degree due to another influence. The drama had been detained two years by the censorship, and only released at length on the express command of the Emperor. In those days the censorship of Austria was a vigilant guardian of royal honour, and yet, far from encouraging tributes to it, appeared to consider it one of those delicate subjects which are best left altogether untouched. To abuse the royal lineage was to incur a personal danger, and to glorify it was to have one's MS. consigned indefinitely to some dusty limbo of condemned writings, in the company of libellous articles and treasonable pamphlets. As Jeffrey said of Landor, it was a crime to differ from the Government, and an offence to agree with it. No doubt it was difficult for such a Government to receive compliments without suspecting the sincerity of their authors; and it is nearly as easy to understand the retention for two years of a play which so signally ennobled the founder of the dynasty, as the requirement by the same censorship that the murderer of old Moor should be his nephew, not his son, or the addition of a *finale* to *Wilhelm Tell*, in which the hero receives upon the guillotine the due of a tyrannicide.

The fortune of his next play was even more grotesque. *Ein Treuer Diener seines Herrn*, based upon a Hungarian historical play, contained a striking picture of the fidelity of a vassal, Bancban, to his lord the emperor. But if the critics accused the poet of servility to the imperial house, the emperor himself did his utmost to annihilate the play. He sent a private offer to Grillparzer to purchase it, under the pretext that he admired it so much that he wished to be its sole possessor. He failed, the MS. being already printed; but the poet now began at length to see that whoever touched, however tenderly, the history of his country, would burn his fingers. He returned accordingly to his pictures of ideal love, and to ages in which the Hapsburg pedigree was no longer traceable. *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen*, 1831, was a transcript of the tale of "Hero and Leander." Although it has very great beauty, this is rather lyric than dramatic; and it distinctly falls short of *Sappho*, which it most resembles, in intensity of situation. It met accordingly with little enthusiasm. The failure of a work following so distinctly the direction of his greatest performance, seemed

to augur that Grillparzer's day was over; but one more triumph was to precede the last crushing blow. In 1834 was performed *Der Traum ein Leben*, which he had begun already after the completion of *Sappho*. The title at once connects it with Calderon's *Vida es sueño*, of which it is in a manner the converse. If Calderon, with his Catholic other-worldliness, insisted on the dream-like unsubstantiality of life, Grillparzer, whose Catholicism was very superficial indeed, dwelt on the life-like significance of dreams. Both dramas turn upon the taming of a savage desire; but with Sigismund this is effected by a bit of real experience artfully simulated to a dream, while Rustan is converted by an actual dream, the representation of which, with characteristically bizarre and fantastic forms, fills the greater part of the play. It is said that at the first performance, in which the transition from real life to dream was somewhat disguised, the audience looked coldly on the studious extravagance of this fantastic world, until at the end of the fourth act some significant words of Rustan disclosed the intention, and changed their indifference into the loudest enthusiasm. It should be added that this, like the *Ahnfrau*, was written in the Spanish manner of octosyllabic trochaics, which Grillparzer wisely abandoned afterwards. Four years later appeared the *soi-disant* comedy, *Weh' dem der lügt*, which, as has been said, utterly failed, in part by its barrenness of the comic qualities it promised; and the audience mingled with their groans taunting assurances that the deceiving poet would discover the truth of his own title. In consequence of this Grillparzer withdrew still more completely into the retirement from which he had hitherto only at intervals emerged; writing several dramas, but for long refusing to show them to his closest friends. The most remarkable is the fragment *Esther*, which recalls in part, by the subdued refinement of its colouring, Lessing's *Nathan*, though in many respects the two men stood at the opposite poles of dramatic art.

The above brief narrative of Grillparzer's dramatic career can certainly have contributed little to justify, or even to make intelligible, the description of him as a national poet. His relation to his countrymen is in fact very peculiar. His father, an advocate, like so many poets' fathers, had that extreme rigidity of moral fibre which is often favoured by a limited imagination. He would not admit distinctions between widely different degrees of guilt. The debtor was to him a thief. He was wholly possessed by a few strong affections, and unable to enter into, or to make allowances for, the acts of those who did not share them. Such a man was little fitted for society, and did indeed anxiously avoid it. Children especially, even his own, were beyond his range of appreciation, and he treated them with alternations of blundering kindness and almost comic severity. Still, the very simplicity of the man had in it something childlike, and it is not surprising that now and then some trifling incident or expression, touching a common chord in father and child, brought a golden moment of mutual understanding. There was,

too, hidden away beneath the grave and silent exterior, an eager boyish delight in wonderful romances, which breaks out at rare moments and casts a genial glow for an instant over the hard features. "I could give him no greater pleasure than by bringing him some tale of knights and spirits, which the grave man, standing by the Swedish stove with a glass of beer, would read far into the night." But this delight in the wonderful was but one phase of his passion for nature,—nature in all her aspects, and on whatever scale. The majesty of nature he sought among the hills, and her humbler beauties he cultivated in his garden. He would take his children long walks into the beautiful country around Vienna, and on these occasions his habitual reserve would melt away under the inspiration of that semi-personal life of flower and tree which, neither mute and barren like the inanimate world, nor critical and exclusive like man, influences so kindly those whose human environment does not readily respond to their needs. What is inarticulate passion in the parent often becomes poetry in the child; and the elder Grillparzer clearly had the sensibility which was a condition of the brilliant facility of the younger. The lyric utterance itself was related rather to his mother's gifts. She was a simple, homely soul, with as little book-learning as usually belonged to the German women of three generations ago, and though not sharing his dread of society, she was nearly as deficient in social talent. Both indeed were absolutely without humour, and her most intimate acquaintances, it is said, never saw her smile. She reflected, too, her husband's rigidity of moral principle in the feminine spheres of religious decorum and domestic order. Not that religion was more to her than a mode of fear, or that the first law of heaven had in itself any powerful inspiration for her: she simply attended mass regularly—whither neither her husband nor her children ever accompanied her—and took endless trouble in keeping order among her children, without being at much pains to observe it herself. But this so far rather ordinary character was lighted up by an absorbing passion for music, just as her husband, who was limited but not ordinary, was aided to expression by a similar passion for nature: she had the artistic quickness, which often, as Mr. Lewes says of Goethe's mother, in women and poets takes the place of understanding: it gave her insight and apprehension, as his gift gave him in some degree utterance and unreserve: "she had a sense for everything," says her son, "and could penetrate where she did not understand." Sometimes this musical passion led her into trouble. One summer the family were living in a village near Vienna, and it chanced that a room in the same house and on the same floor was occupied by Beethoven. There, when the composer was storming away on the piano, Frau Grillparzer would softly open their door, or even steal out upon the common landing. But it is sometimes dangerous to worship too audaciously near the shrine; and on one of these occasions the demi-god suddenly burst out of his sanctuary, and finding a listener, strode wrathfully out of the house. On that day the piano was

closed ; and not all the apologies and promises of Frau Grillparzer could ever cause it to be reopened.

The young Grillparzer bore strong marks of both his parents : the same limitations, breaking out in a single direction into brilliant power ; the same apparent commonness of grain relieved by a single thread of rare fineness ; the same mixture, now odd, now touching, of dignity and *naïveté*, of prose and poetry ; the same alternations of humility and pride, of reverence and sarcastic humour. He attained a far wider culture than his parents, but his unfolded mind still only displayed more fundamentally the contrast discernible in their simpler natures ; the divergences were carried deeper and developed into new combinations, not transcended. The poet held an office under the government ; and this immersion in official routine, though highly uncongenial to him, sufficiently symbolises the prosaic life and neutral mental attitude, we might almost add the cold and repelling manners, of the man who yet knew such impetuous hours of lyric inspiration, such sleepless nights and fasting days of joyous facile creation. The same discords are imprinted in his face, in which only the fine blue eyes express poetic vigour and fire, while the refined mouth is a strange union of sweet *naïveté* half disenchanted, and bitter experience half achieved, and the lines about the cheeks and brow are those of moroseness quite as much as of thought. A man whose reserve made him isolated, and whose isolation left him to blunder as he might into self-knowledge and worldly experience ; not patient in his errors and troubles, but sensitive and querulous, and recording with lamentations his bad dinners and his hard beds ; slow to admit close friendship even when ardently offered by an eminent brother poet, though abounding with encouragements for younger aspirants—if not too promising ; a bitter and not very profound critic, ever ready to snarl out a scathing verse at the extravagant romantics Tieck and F. Schlegel, the exponent of theoretical *Æsthetic*, Hegel, and above all the “smatterer in criticism,” Gervinus,—

. . . who takes his historical *minus*
For a poetic *plus* :
O asinus !

Indeed, his relations with all his eminent contemporaries were throughout quite casual and fragmentary. Not more than once or twice did he exchange a letter with any of his fellow-poets. The one or two occasions in which he emerged from this seclusion—his journeys to Italy, to Paris, and above all, to Germany in 1825—did not permanently diminish it. He exchanged a few words at Paris with Rossini, listened to an hour's brilliant talk from Heine, and became an intimate acquaintance of Börne ; but with all alike he ceased connection after leaving Paris. Similarly in Germany, where he was received with equal cordiality by all the sects of literature. He met Tieck at Dresden, and may be excused for recounting with some malice how he read the *Edipus at*

Colonus to a very drowsy audience ; he saw Franz Horn, and may be pardoned a fling at one of the superfluous race of Shakspeare commentators. But there were others more akin to him. The romantic Fouqué, then in the height of his fame, Chamisso, Devrient, and Varnhagen, whose more famous wife Rahel talked to him so overpoweringly, that "at the end," says he, "I know not whether I left the house myself, or whether they put me out ;" Hegel, who welcomed the composer of the trilogy of the *Golden Fleece*, possibly because its form suggested the characteristic scheme of Hegelian development ; afterwards at Weimar, Hummel—"the last *unverfälschte* scholar of Mozart's"—and Graff, the original actor of *Wallenstein*, whom Schiller is said to have publicly embraced upon the stage after the first performance, exclaiming, "Now for the first time I understand my own *Wallenstein* !"—finally, Goethe, who at first repelled him by his stiffness among his guests, but charmed him in the freedom of private intercourse, receiving him "half like a king, half like a father"—all these he saw, and saw once for all. His acquaintance with Frederick Schlegel was confined to a single call, under the pressure of urgent need, at Rome. Musician as he was, he never knew his fellow-townsmen Schubert, and even the impulsive kindnesses of Beethoven led to a relationship of which the symbol and the monument is an opera libretto poorly composed by the one and never scored by the other. One characteristic story, however, is told of them. While Grillparzer was still poor and little known, Beethoven, who was then living a little out of town, heard of it and pressed the poet to visit him. The autobiography tells us, in amusing detail, how, as they dined together, Beethoven took every opportunity of slyly heaping his plate with food and putting fresh bottles beside him. As he was about to return in the vehicle he had hired, Beethoven suddenly bethought him of some business in Vienna, and proposed to accompany him ; but his purpose was plain when, at the end of the drive, hastily alighting, he handed the driver a note and received Grillparzer's remonstrances with twinkling eyes and a suppressed chuckle of delight.

Yet solitary as Grillparzer essentially was—and he occasionally expresses not merely the self-assertion of a solitary man, but almost the *brutalité* of an Ishmael—he had likewise that even comical sensitiveness to the opinions of others which it so often conceals. He is especially anxious when he has committed any slight social indecorum ; and records naïvely how, when dining at Goethe's table, in the ardour of conversation, he unthinkingly crumbled his bread about the cloth, and was reduced to shame by seeing Goethe silently sweep the unsightly fragments "with his finger" into a heap. If the finger had proceeded to write "*Mene, mene*" before his face, the guest would hardly have been more abashed. So, when on his arrival the aged poet receives him with words of unexpected kindness, Grillparzer, his sensitive nature seized by the overpowering impression of Goethe's personality, of all that he was and had been, burst into tears. Few will fail to sympathise

with him; but he himself is only conscious that he has committed an extraordinary breach of manners, "which Goethe considerably did his best to conceal." "That was my first Weimar stupidity," is his summary comment on the incident.

But the unsympathetic moroseness which is now and then broken by traits of this kind, had a deeper root than mere selfishness or dullness. Grillparzer was deeply dissatisfied with his country and with his time. He felt keenly the divisions which made national life impossible, and scoffed at the efforts of those who thought to have a national art without it. "You call out for a true German poetry," he cries, with that bitter accent which is so natural to the assertors of unpopular truths, "but show me the German character. You weep and rejoice and bluster and cry and threaten, for 'freedom at any cost,' and raise historic, or rather hysteric cries for the *Biedersinn* of the past: Strauss makes fools of you with his myths, Hegel with his new God, and Schelling with his attempts to prop up the old one. Or is your boast depth of feeling? Well, at any rate your attacks on sentimentality (*Empfindelei*) have cost many a blow to sentiment (*Empfindung*), and instead of feeling, you talk frigidly in rugged rhymes, with commonplace thoughts. Or are you a people of thinkers? Mere chatterers of whatever you have heard from worthless teachers such as Gervinus and Menzel, who stand and guard you like sentinels in their narrow sentry boxes. . . . Your taste is continually changing: what to-day you like, to-morrow disappears; deep judgment is replaced by mere weak approval: you live from day to day. . . . You have but books, no monuments. Where, then, is the German character?"

In a more special sense he was out of accord with his Viennese fellow-citizens. The gay easy life, the absorption in the present, the facile abandonment to every sensuous impulse, which are happily hit off in the name *Wiener-kind*, as well as the combination of French versatility and Italian fervour, which, though equally characteristic, it misses, dissatisfied him. He was far from being insensible to the charms of this temperament, far from being devoid of it, in certain moods, himself. But he felt the emptiness of continual pleasure-seeking. "*Entbehren sollst du, sollst entbehren!*" had more meaning for him than for most of his fellow-citizens. Here is a stanza from a short lyric of his bearing this very title:—

One truth is taught alike by greyest age
And by the sun which first this morning shone;
That want is man's eternal heritage,
And nought is thine but what thou hast foregone.

A poet with this motto was indeed likely to strike somewhat strangely a people who had just been carried away by the dramas of Iffland and Kotzebue, in which deified sentimentality panted out without resistance or rivalry its life of sobs, raptures, vows, and embraces. This is one explanation of the strange alternations of his dramatic fortunes. And surely no poet who was recognised even in his own generation as

having distinctly struck a national note, ever tasted of glory and disgrace, honour and neglect, in such extremes as did the poet who, not many years after his *Ahnfrau* had taken Germany by storm, and his *Sappho* been translated into nearly all European languages, saw his *Hero and Leander* damned with faint praise and his *Weh' dem der lügt* with shouts of derision. He was, in fact, one of those men who, while possessing both a powerful sympathy for one element of the national character, and also the faculty of supplying it to intoxication with the intellectual food it demands, nevertheless are repelled by another element in it as powerfully as they are attracted by the former, and are apt to mingle a certain bitterness with their enthusiasm, and an air of restraint or of defiance with their inspiration. They are half loyal sons, half carping critics. Grillparzer's natural reserve, moreover, by withdrawing him from the assimilating influence of society, contributed to put him at fault in catching its tone; and his no less marked tenacity of purpose led him to defy it rather than yield, when his pet theories of art were at stake. Both his successes and his failures owed something to pure accident: to the chance which fascinated him with a happy theme, or suffered him to pass just out of sight of some siren subject which would have inevitably made him ridiculous. He had the quick impressibility of the south, and at the same time that hard resistant grit of character which is more properly northern. His nature in part recalls the woman of an Italian portrait, whose delicate skin, now pale, now flushed, is transparent to every shade of feeling; in part it suggests some Flemish face, angular, impassive, or perhaps reflecting a settled melancholy due to the annoyances of a fickle world. But in Grillparzer these two natures did not mingle and conflict; they engaged him separately and wholly; they were like rivals who have compounded their claims by an agreement to enjoy them alternately. He was himself quite conscious of this. "In me," he says, "there live two completely separate beings: a poet of the most far-reaching, nay, overwhelming imagination, and a *Verstandes-mensch* of the utmost coldness and harshness." As in other poets, who have to pass over a great gulf from their ordinary to their poetic consciousness, the latter took to Grillparzer almost the form of a dream or a trance; the mood came upon him like the angel descending to stir the waters, and when under its full influence he wrote with unpausing pen, forgetful of meals and sleep, and sometimes drawing an additional stimulus from the morbid imagination of fever. His mind was one of those which such exaltation appears wholly to transform: like fresh water dashed upon a dusty mosaic, it brought out the latent lines of his genius in their original richness and distinction; it gave him memory and insight, and subtle intelligence and warm imagination, and self-oblivion. In other respects Grillparzer bears a considerably greater resemblance to Goethe than to Schiller; but this spasmodic inspiration reminds us rather of Schiller drawing stimulus in the small hours from his coffee and his drawer of rotten apples, than of his greater rival, whose

whole nature was so finely pitched that, without any such elaborate preparation, it merely needed to be touched to give out gracious music. It is not hard, then, to understand how Grillparzer the poet should have differed from Grillparzer the man, almost as the fantastic, daring, and romantic spirit of dreams differs from the sober spirit of reality; how the one should have followed out with the most searching delicacy of expression all the windings and recesses, all the lurking-places and sudden reappearances of the passion of love, which the other, if it does not ignore, at least celebrates with a somewhat distant and self-possessed worship; or again, how a certain romantic extravagance of sentiment and indulgence for sentiment should be infused in the work of the poet, while the sound every-day wit of the *Verstandesmenschen* is never weary of launching sarcasms at the other vagaries of the romantic school, is disgusted with the eccentric German artists at Rome who go about in the dress of Nurembergers of the thirteenth century, and finds the Gothic cathedrals of England intolerable by their suggestions of romantic *Alterthümelei*. It is highly characteristic that the poet whose best dramas were blamed for nothing so much as for their intensely romantic rehabilitation of classical themes, was, as has been said, out of *rappor*t with all the chiefs of romanticism: scoffed at "Tieck and the romance hodge-podge," stood contemptuously aloof from the fanatical Catholicism of Frederick Schlegel, and lived throughout almost entirely unknown to poets like Rückert, Uhland, and Fouqué. His *Verstandeswesen* was, however, such rather by temperament than by faculty. He had the limitations of understanding with little of its fine qualities; his narrow field of vision was not exceptionally clear, his low-pitched flight of speculation was not remarkably steady. His mind easily fell into the critical attitude, but had little critical penetration; he had the coldness, the captiousness, the aloofness which give temper to the intellectual blade, but he wanted the edge without which the finest-tempered steel will not cut. Hence, this side of his nature merely alienated him in a measure from his fellow-citizens, without winning him in return the homage which even an alien receives if only he be great enough. He was repelled by their flightiness of character, their southern lack of stamina mingled with their southern impressibility; but he was unable to display in his own person the grand whole four-square character which would have won instinctive homage from the lightest-hearted of the *Wiener-kinder*. But if this groundwork of *Verstand* was a source of mutual repulsion, his imagination, whenever it broke free from the somewhat mechanical intelligence which ordinarily restrained it, rapidly ended the rupture; and evoking with easy mastery the passions which were more easily kindled in his countrymen than in himself only because they lay nearer the surface, extorted even from unwilling lips the applause of the heart, and the admission that no one before him had understood the genius of the Austrian people. As he said himself, in touching verses:

Weil mich Geselligkeit mit Vielen nicht vereint,
 Hält man mich hie und da für einen Menschenfeind.
 Euch flieht nur mein Verstand, mein Herz ist euch geblieben:
 Und ich entferne mich um fürder euch zu lieben.

It would be strange if these bizarre contrasts in his character did not reflect themselves in his dramatic theories. For Grillparzer had theories, and his antipathy to Gervinus and the rest was not altogether what it sometimes appeared to be, the resentment of the artist who works by inspiration against the critic who applies principles; in some degree it was also the jealousy of a rival theorist, and the bitterness of one whose rivalry is not acknowledged. His theory is a rather heterogeneous collection of dogmas, expressed in the harsh ungraceful style usual with him, which, however, fall pretty easily at the touch of the critic's knife into two systems. One set are obviously prompted by an influence akin to that which unified and regulated and concentrated the drama of France, to that criticism which dictated arbitrary rules by its very impatience of the arbitrary, and sometimes destroyed *vraisemblance* by too narrow a pursuit of it. The other group suggests Teutonic parentage; it clearly derives from that type of imagination, so prominent in the German romantic school, which grasps like a revelation every hint of the wonderful, and revels in whatever to the sober intelligence is unreal. Grillparzer was very far from sharing the contempt of most of his countrymen for the famous unities, and was for ever preaching the sanctity of those limits to the capacities of the various arts, which enthusiasm, in its search for fresh expression, continually seeks to transcend. Music striving to be plastic, sculpture daubing itself with colour, prose constrained into the rhythms and tricked out with the imagery of poetry, these were abominations to the *Verstandesmensch* Grillparzer, as to the *Verstandesmensch* Lessing. In one of his satirical poems, for example, *Die Schwester*, he represents Prose, a damsel whose province is the solid ground which she sows with useful seeds, as seized with an ambition to emulate the airy flight of poetry; she claps upon her own broad shoulders the delicate wings which her sister has temporarily thrown aside, but her heavy limbs refuse to carry her when she steps off from the precipice's edge. This poem is altogether in the spirit of the critic who narrowly defines and jealously guards the sanctity of his definitions, who sets up the image of the god Terminus in a high place and sacrifices on his altar the enthusiasts who defy him. It is the assault of the classical spirit of limitation upon the romantic spirit of unfettered individuality, the reassertion of law against deified impulse. But in another region, as I have said, Grillparzer attaches himself to an apparently quite alien artistic ideal, to the pursuit of that region of the strange and wonderful, namely, of which the very essence is the abnegation of ordinary laws and limits. To make the wonderful one's canon in art is at least in appearance to ally oneself with what is unlimited and transcends limits; it easily passes into a delight

in the unreal merely as such ; it is akin to the child's delight in a phantasmagoria of brilliant but unmeaning colours. Yet Grillparzer says, "For my own part, if I were denied the use of the wonderful and legendary in poetry, it would have for me no pleasure and no charm."

However, when we penetrate a little further, we perceive that the charm which the wonderful has for Grillparzer is not its unreality, but, on the contrary, its possession of an abiding reality. He approaches it, not like the fantastic poet, for a moment of light and graceful dalliance, but with something of the mystic's solemn homage. Not that religious feeling is any way concerned : he was all his life not so much an enemy of religion as the inhabitant of an entirely different world. Neither theology nor yet philosophy, for which he had the contempt of a true South German, had any share in determining this purely poetic attitude. "Both these," says he, "annihilate life as such ; the one turning to a life hereafter, the other doing its best to dissolve the life that now is in its unreason and triviality. The wonderful, on the other hand, derives from the Fact itself, the essential, enduring, and eternal ; and since we cannot avail ourselves in poetry of an abstract conception like foresight (a constant reference to the future), we must pass over by means of the wonderful, which in poetry is real, into the heavenly region of the indissoluble and eternal."

In fact, a certain realism lies at the very bottom of Grillparzer's artistic nature, and allies itself with all his moods. At the same time the union involves much concession, and the rival faculties, whose jarring antagonism has just been sketched, force upon their common ally a strange inconsistency of costume and accoutrement. Under the influence of the imaginative mood the whole conception of reality expands until the familiar features of ordinary regular law-abiding life appear to be merely an illusive surface, which partially conceals the solely essential region of the wonderful. But when the imagination is less active and this fundamental realism falls into the hands, so to speak, of the merely literal and hard intelligence, it appears in a new region, in a new dress, and produces that impulse to a rigid conformity of art to nature which is characteristic of the imaginative. Hence Grillparzer's defence of the unities, and his constant demand for the continuity of the dramatic action, are not, after all, anomalous. They result from that limitation of the imaginary scene by the conditions inevitable to the actual one, which would, if carried a little further, equally require that the actor should be what he represents, and that only an inflexible republican should be admissible for Brutus, only a witty devotee of old-fashioned sack for Falstaff. But in Grillparzer's case this demand for continuity received, it is important to note, further support from the peculiar nature of his impetuous but coy and fitful imagination, which any break in the stream of represented events was apt to disconcert or put to flight. As a composer he only enjoyed the full tide of inspiration when he could thus accompany, scene by

scene, every step in the continuous progress of the original action ; and it was not, perhaps, unnatural that he should elevate a method by which he succeeded into a canon of art. But this certainly involved the fallacy of identifying a condition of success with success itself, as if one should prescribe as an æsthetic rule for a painter that he mix his colours well. And there is the additional fallacy that it is a quite peculiar and relative condition of success which he not merely confuses with success itself, but represents as an absolute and universal condition of it. He not only makes well-mixed colours the essence of a good picture, but roundly declares that the use of some pet nostrum of his own is equally a criterion of perfect art.

It may be easily judged in what type of drama Grillparzer moved most at ease. Not in the historical drama, with its wide canvas, its crowd of separate figures, its comprehensive array of political events ; interruptions and *lacunæ* are inevitable here ; the author who undertook to represent every inch of progress of the political car would advance a very little way before the most patient of the audience cried out, like the duck in Chaucer's Parliament of Fowls, at the inexhaustible oratory of the goose. No doubt he occasionally chose such themes. *Ottokar* and *Ein Treuer Diener* were both attempts to dramatise the national history of Austria. Yet the success of both was partly due to this very fact ; and the independent merit which the former at least possesses, is confined to certain scenes in which the action is developed without check or halt ; where the action is broken the inspiration flags. It is clear that Grillparzer was rather made for the drama of private life, which, whatever the complications of intrigue which the ingenuity of France and Spain has introduced into it, admits quite as readily a plot of the utmost simplicity and compression. And Grillparzer's plots are almost uniformly of extreme simplicity,—a simplicity which appears now noble, now bald and meagre, according to the somewhat arbitrary flow of his inspiration. No doubt our excellences are often the indirect result of a fault. We have the qualities of our defects as well as the defects of our qualities ; and the simplicity of Grillparzer, even where it is finest and most statuesque, is not unconnected with a certain poverty in the power of inventing situations. The strength of his imagination lay in quite another region—in the discovery of emotionally telling detail, and of a rich and poetic expression for all the phases which thought assumes under the promptings of powerful feeling. This feeling is, no doubt, in Grillparzer's most characteristic works, the passion of love ; *Sappho* and *Des Meeres und der Liebe Wellen* are Greek idylls infused with German sentiment ; *Die Ahnfrau* and *Traum ein Leben* show the same dominating colour, but throw about it the less purely human and natural light of Teutonic mysticism or Spanish fantasticality. *The Golden Fleece* in some degree resembles both ; the human interest of the action is predominant, but its supernatural significance is continually recalled ; while the hand of a poet, German

and South German in heart, and romantic in genius, however unromantic in life, shows itself in the prominence of all the elements of pathos in the fortune of Medea, and the subordination of those of terror. The latter could not of course be eliminated without destroying the story ; but they are kept in the background. Medea does, no doubt, kill her children and compass the death of Creusa ; yet it is felt that the real tragedy does not lie in their destruction, but in the sufferings of Medea. These terrible deeds are rather incidental effects of the tragic climax than that climax itself. They are like the tearing of flesh and hair under the stress of extreme grief, where the torn flesh borrows most of its significance from the broken heart.

Something there is of a Guido-like excess of feeling in Grillparzer, and his art, like Guido's, bears the character of incipient decadence. His Medea distinctly belongs to the class of types in which emotion seems on the point of overpowering form—the woeful face of the Magdalen, the agonised contortions of the Laocoön, the effeminate fluency of the curves of flamboyant tracery. This might be said of much also of the romantic poetry ; but it is to Grillparzer's credit that his sentiment never approached that slough of impurity into which romanticism flung itself headlong, and which threatens more or less every sentimental movement. He had as little in common with the Schlegel who wrote *Lucinde* as with him who, penitent and converted, would cross the street in Vienna to kiss a priest's hand ; and as little in common with either as with the “ young Germany ” school of degenerate Hegelians, who swore by Heine and Börne, and carried materialism and sensuality as far as moral uprightness and idealism had been carried by their master. Grillparzer thought that poetry had little concern with these sloughs. This view of its aims and dignity was high and worthy of it. Indeed, if anything, one might object that he separated it too completely from the world, and gave it a sphere too inaccessibly secluded from profane feet. He seemed to regard it as a sort of godlike being, fragile in conflict with the brute forces of common life, and descending only to perish from the lonely mountains into the busy world of men. Such is the idea which he has worked out, with some help from the kindred inspiration of Goethe's *Tasso*, in the fine drama of *Sappho*, with a brief description of which we will conclude.

The opening scene, as usual with Grillparzer, strikes boldly the keynote of the whole. It is the day of Sappho's triumphant return from Olympia, and all Lesbos is astir with expectation. At length distant shouts are heard. They grow louder and louder, and the chariot enters surrounded by a rejoicing multitude, in which stands Sappho with her wreath and golden lyre. By her side and abashed by her magnificent presence, is Phaon, the youth who had travelled to Olympia to catch one glimpse of the wonderful poetess, and who had there by his very modesty drawn upon himself, unsought, the overwhelming gift of her love. Naturally enough he is dazzled by an issue so undreamt of, and easily mistakes for love his own exalted wor-

ship of her genius. He is even now rather the timid disciple than the confident lover: he seems to sit at her feet rather than to stand at her side. Sappho, on the other hand, though her large nature seems altogether to envelop and overpower his, is full of a new inspiration: she has abandoned the loneliness of art, thrown away her lyre, and embraced the calmer lot of ordinary mankind; she has descended "from the cloud-climbing peaks of poetry to the beaming flower-dales of life," and Phaon's hand has led her. By his side she will live a simple, quiet shepherd's life, and turn Lesbos with its consuming passion into an Arcadia of gentle and peaceful sentiment. But these buoyant hopes are soon to be dashed. The poetess who had no rival on her mountain peaks finds that a mere child can twine the flowers of the valley in her hair more bewitchingly than she. Melitta, the maiden of fifteen years whom Sappho had brought up from the cradle and treats more as a mother than a mistress—this charming mixture of infantine *naïveté* and budding knowledge, whose love is the child's instinctive reaching out to the hanging fruit, and whose rebellion, like a first truancy, is begun in the rapture of a new experience, continued in shame and fear, and ended in tears and forgiveness—Melitta, as she hands the wine-cup trembling, catches Phaon's eye, and he is quickly taught the true nature of his feeling for Sappho. He finds her alone gathering roses, and she tells him artlessly the story of her captivity. His passion rapidly gains strength; and the image of Sappho is already utterly effaced when she herself enters. She hastily dismisses Melitta, but is too delicate to upbraid Phaon directly. Not that he betrays any shame. He is lost in the vision that has just passed away, and answers mechanically her forced questions. She is deeply hurt, and turns to withdraw into the grotto overlooking the sea where she was wont to write; "not that I hope to-day to find the Muse, but quiet at least is certain, and I need it." The third act discloses Phaon sleeping on the turf bank. Sappho comes out of her grotto, haunted by "that hateful image" she had seen, and incapable of other thoughts. That Aphrodite whom she so splendidly wooed has indeed come, and with scorching fire. Yet calmer thoughts succeed. She recalls the inconstant nature of masculine love, and reproves herself for having so hastily measured it by the standard of the absorbing passion of woman. Then, suddenly perceiving his sleeping form, she takes pity on him, and repents of her suspicion. He smiles in his sleep, his lips quiver with a name; and she eagerly interprets in her own favour these unconscious signs. She kisses his forehead, and he wakes, and the name springs from his lips, but it is that of Melitta. She starts back with a cry; but Phaon addresses her with the easy *bonhomie* of a man who is perfectly happy and willing to congratulate others on his own good fortune:—

Thou, Sappho? Greeting to thee! Well I knew
That something fair stood by me, since my dream
Was also of so fair a countenance.
Thou art so sad! What wouldst thou? I am gay!

And then all the intellectual exaltation of love utters itself in eloquent imagery from his lips ; but Sappho only echoes bitterly to herself, "Melitta !" She at length waves this self-absorbed lover to depart, and is left to realise her situation. She no longer attempts to disguise it. Sappho is despised for the sake of her own slave-girl. She now begins to regret the glories she had so eagerly abandoned, and to long for the lonely peaks of poetry, since the flowers in the valley had proved bitter and galling. She has voluntarily renounced a divine heritage, and stands forlorn, excluded from her native region. Bitterly she feels that the union she had attempted was made vain by her very greatness ; the immortal spirit and the mortal will not be linked together, the coarser will either be altogether overpowered by the more ethereal flame of its consort, or break away in repulsion, and use its rude strength to humiliate and afflict it.

Him whom the gods have chosen for their own
 May not be joined to denizens of earth ;
 The lot of mortals and of sons of heaven
 In one cup is not mingled. Of two worlds
 One must thou choose, and when thou once hast chosen
 There's no retreat.

She sends for Melitta, "this wonderful beauty, that boasts of such a conquest over Sappho." She enters crowned with roses, and stands hesitating at the threshold. Sappho utters an involuntary exclamation at her beauty, but presently, controlling her agitation, draws the child to her and reminds her of the infant whom she had rescued from the pirates and brought up in her home. Having thus established her wonted sway and reduced the victorious rival to the attitude of the submissive slave-girl, she bids her put off her wedding raiment and her roses. Melitta silently removes the wreath, but when it comes to the rose in her breast, she hesitates. "Why sparest thou that rose? Away with it!" Melitta steps back, and folds her arms over it. Sappho fiercely repeats her command, and wrought into uncontrollable passion by Melitta's refusal, draws her dagger. At this moment Phaon enters, and the sight scatters at once every remnant of his idyllic devotion to Sappho. He loudly asks the reason of the dagger, and when he has heard it warmly defends Melitta.

She refused the rose?
 By all the gods, 'twas rightly done, and no one
 Shall rob her of the flower. I gave it her,
 To be a sign that not in every breast
 The pang for woes unmerited is dead ;
 To be a drop of honey in the cup
 Forced to her lips by strangers' insolence ;
 To be a pledge of my own deep belief
 That woman's glory is a quiet spirit,
 And the gay flower-wreath of innocence
 Worth more than all the laurel crowns of fame.

A reproachful cry breaks from Sappho :

O hear not the sweet tone,
 It does but lure thee, flattering, to her steel!
 I, too, have heard it. Long or ere I saw her
 She cast from far her lyric net about me,
 And in that soft entanglement enchained
 By golden threads she drew me to herself,
 And ever close and closer, if I strove,
 The gracious magic circles hemmed me in.

* * * * *

Thy look first gave me to myself again ;
 Trembling I saw myself in Circe's house,
 And felt my neck already bowed and bent !
 But still I was not loosed ; herself it needed,
 Herself, her own enchantment to dissolve !

After this, words are impossible ; the relation of Sappho and Phaon can only be further developed by action ; and accordingly, the drama which so far has been stirred by the undulations of a merely mental conflict, begins to reverberate with the shock of violent deeds. Sappho commissions the old slave Rhamnes to take Melitta secretly by night to Chios. He is, however, discovered in the act by Phaon, who, furious at what he supposes to be an attempt to make away with her, resolves to carry her off himself, and leave without delay the terrible poetess whose jealousy promises to destroy him as soon as he is disenchanted of her love. Melitta weeps, but does not resist, and they put off successfully from the shore. But Rhamnes hastens to rouse the inhabitants, over whom Sappho wields a sort of sovereignty, "not because she commands, but because we serve her," and they pursue the fugitives, who are swiftly brought back. Phaon at first takes the indignant tone of a free man to whom illegal violence has been offered ; and as for his having carried away the slave of Sappho, he bids her name any ransom she pleases and he will pay it, rather than consent to leave Melitta in hands which had threatened her life. He bitterly reproaches Sappho for being so little the noble nature she appeared, and using the gift of poetry not as a perfume-breathing flower, but as a poisonous hemlock for the destruction of her enemies. And this thought recalls the image of the Sappho whom he had believed in, and his heart softens as he draws the noble features in which his enthusiastic imagination had conceived her. Sappho, who has not yet spoken to Phaon, and listened with averted face, utters a sudden cry of agitation. Phaon eagerly seizes the sign, commits his passionate words to the winds, and calls her to show herself once more the goddess whom for a little while he had dreamed to be human. Yet he now understands better at once the audacity and the instability of such a passion conceived in a heart of very ordinary human clay.

I loved thee as a man may love the gods,
 As a man loves the beautiful and good.
 With higher beings, Sappho, hold discourse ;
 Scathless can no one from Olympic feasts
 Descend into the ranks of mortal men.

Phaon, however, is in no way exhausted by his passion, and is able to pass lightly over to a more equal attachment; but Sappho abandoned herself utterly to hers, and even her native region of divine song exists no more for her. The mortal who strove to embrace the goddess has escaped scot-free; it is the goddess who is shattered and tortured. She has retired hastily from the repentant Phaon, and Eucharis, her faithful slave, follows fearfully from afar, and sees her lady gazing motionless upon the foaming sea.

Only at times she stirs and grasps at flowers,
At jewels, gold, whatever she can reach,
And throws them down into the buoyant flood,
And followeth with longing eyes their fall.

Suddenly the sea-breeze stirs the lyre hung upon the wall, and produces a whisper of music.

She draws a deep breath, and looks up, and starts
As at the moving of a higher power;
Her eyes are fixed fast upon the lyre,
And sudden the dead features grow alive
And a strange smile is playing about the lips;
They open, and utter words of dreadful sound
That come from Sappho's lips, but are not hers.
"Dost call me, old acquaintance? Dost remind me?
O, I go with thee, friend upon the wall!
Of time gone thou remind'st me: have my thanks!"

She takes down the lyre, and puts on her victor's crown and purple robe. She has immortal longings in her, and like Cleopatra will die surrounded by all the symbols of her glory. She comes forth again to the altar overlooking the sea, where she had left Phaon and Melitta, and stands before them in the grave calm of one who is already in another world than theirs. "If thou hast ever, Sappho, with gentle eye beheld me," begins the prostrate Phaon. She interrupts him:—

Thou speakest of things past.
I sought for thee, and I have found myself!
Thou didst not feel my passion, therefore go!
My hope must tread upon a firmer ground.

Pha. And dost thou hate me then?

Sap.

Love! Hate!

Is there no third state else? I did esteem thee,
I do esteem thee still and ever shall,
Even as the pleasant comrade of a voyage
Whom for a little space the whim of chance
Brought to our side, until, the journey over,
We part, and each one goes his several way;—
Yet often from the strange and distant land
Thinking of the beloved voyager—

(*Her voice fails.*)

Pha. O Sappho!

Sap.

Silence! let us part in peace!

Forgive it, ye who have seen Sappho weak.
To Sappho's weakness I will reconcile you.

She then bids them all withdraw, and ascends the altar "to take counsel in solitude with my own." She calmly thanks the gods for giving her glory and immortal fame. They have also suffered her to taste the garlanded cup of life, but not to drink it, and she resigns it obediently. Finally she asks for strength to die nobly, that their priestess might not be the sport of the seeming-wise. "Ye broke the flower, also break the stem." Then she embraces Phaon and Melitta, while the awe-struck folk around seem to see her transfigured already by the glory of the immortals.

For mortals love, and reverence for the gods!
 Enjoy what blooms for you, and think of me!
 The final debt of life thus do I pay.
 Bless them, ye gods, and take me to yourselves!

With that she leaps from the rock, and for a moment there is an uproar of horrified cries. But presently the deep meaning and fitness of her death is felt, and the drama is restored to a perfect repose, in which it concludes.

Sappho is certainly a far more brilliant production than *Die Ahnfrau*, its predecessor, and to all appearance absolutely unlike it. They have nevertheless an analogy. Grillparzer did not relinquish even here that element of the marvellous which fascinated him in poetry; he only sought it in a new region. The gloomy castles and forests of feudalism are replaced by the radiant isles of Greece, the intoxication of Olympian triumphs, the fervour of Lesbian love. So far there is merely a change of scenery. But the source of wonder which was before found in the mysterious, and enhanced by a certain reserve in the artist's touch, is now found in the ideal grandeur, which the fearless plasticity of the sculpture only makes more effective, of the figure of Sappho. In a word, romanticism has yielded to Hellenism, and Calderon for a moment been superseded by Goethe. It has already been hinted that the affinity of the play to Goethe's *Tasso* is something more than accidental. When Grillparzer walked with the aged poet in his garden at Weimar, Goethe spoke of *Sappho* with praise, and the former adds, in his quaint autobiography, modestly: "It was praise of himself, for I modelled it on him." Clearly, however, the "modelling" is that of an original poet. The treatment is quite different—as different as is Musset's treatment of a similar theme in *Les Nuits*. Goethe represents the poet's essay in love shipwrecked on the exclusiveness of courtly sentiment. Musset exhibits him entangled in the meshes of a vulgar passion and humiliated by the caprice of a worldly coquette. Grillparzer depicts him like a god stooping to kiss the brow of a mortal whose dazzled homage for a moment concealed his inner incapacity for so great an affection. *Tasso*, disgraced, still lives; Musset's poet draws inspiration from his grief; Sappho casts into the sea a spirit no longer capable of life even when the consuming passion is extinct. Surrender—victory—death. Certainly of the three the conflict is most intense in Sappho. The tender and slightly-built

Italian, the romantic voluptuary of Musset, enter it scarcely conscious what they do. To the latter, absorption in passion involves no renunciation of poetry, merely oblivion of it; nor was Musset in general the man to renounce anything. Tasso does not recognise the opposition of the two worlds at the outset; it is only brought home to him by the sharp pressure of experience. But Sappho begins with a clear consciousness that she is entering a new world; she deliberately and joyously throws down her lyre, descends to the flower-vales of life, and cries out with the keen accent of the convert at the inadequacy of all she had hitherto believed in:—

O not for nothing hath the Muses' choir
Chosen the barren laurel for its crown:
A fruitless scentless burden to the brain,
Whose labour it doth idly recompense.
O it is bitter to be first of men!
And starving Art must ever beg of Life
An alms out of her superfluity.

Such is the play which Byron prophesied would immortalise its author. I have already pointed out the analogy, which may have helped to win his sympathy, between the lot of the ancient singer and his own; and although few men could be more unlike him than Grillparzer, the story of Sappho is not without its significance for the latter also. He did not shatter himself on a vain love, nor yield to the lethargic spell of one only too successful; but he knew what he meant when he wrote of the barren laurel, though he never discovered a more fruitful tree to replace it. He knew, in a certain sense, the meaning of "starving art," but he had not the skill which nature, or even art itself, may bestow, for begging alms of life. A poet he was and remained, in a society which, in part alien, soon wearied of wooing him where he would not follow, and which only after his death was moved by a powerful impulse to follow him.

One Year in a German Cookery School.

Dienen lerne bei Zeiten das Weib nach ihrer Bestimmung ;
Denn durch Dienen allein gelangt sie endlich zum Herrschen,
Zu der verdienten Gewalt, die doch ihr im Hause gehöret.

Goethe.

It was the last day of April, at half-past ten in the evening. Bed-time had come ; and my father embraced me more tenderly than usual, saying, " God bless you, my child," and then left me alone. I was alone, alone for the last time in my father's house, in my own dear friendly room, which I had to leave next morning early for the first time in my life.

I was sixteen years of age ; and, according to a common custom of German families, I had now to go for twelve months to what is called a Cookery School, in order to learn there everything that is expected from a German housewife. This custom is not universal in Germany ; but it prevails in many districts, especially in the north-western provinces. A girl may be a countess, or a baroness ; a clergyman's or a general's daughter ; or else the child of a butcher or shoemaker. It does not signify how or where she has been born, or what her rank is. The manners of her country require that, whoever she is, she should know how to cook, wash, iron, to clean the rooms, mend the linen, and plant the garden. Of course I do not mean to say that all girls, even in those parts of Germany where the custom is most general, are *forced* to undergo this training. Very many, as may be imagined, shirk it ; and some parents do not feel the necessity of imposing this useful education on their daughters. Yet the good sense of the majority makes them alive to its advantages. For it must be remembered that, whether a woman's future life obliges her to do these things herself or not, and even if her position in the world allows her to keep as many servants as she chooses, these very servants, being German servants, expect her to know how to do all the work which she requires of them. There is only one difference between a baroness and the child of a tradesman. The latter learns the several duties I have mentioned in her father's house and from her mother ; while the former leaves her home to learn the same details of domestic service in a strange house.

My luggage was prepared, and everything was finished. I had nothing to do but to lie down once more in my white-curtained bed, with my head full of all sorts of pictures of my immediate future. They were not very nice pictures that bothered my poor brain that evening. Every

girl is more or less conceited, and I am not at all ashamed to confess that I was kept awake far beyond midnight by the idea that my hands, which until now had never touched anything nasty, would from the next day begin to peel potatoes, and kill ducks and pigeons, and that my complexion would be spoiled by the heat of the kitchen-fire.

Morning came, and with it the farewell from my father, brothers, sisters, and all dear friends. They all accompanied me to the station; another kiss, another shaking of the hand, and the train started, carrying me towards unknown people and unknown work.

The same afternoon I arrived at the station of S——, in the Thuringian Forest. The train had scarcely stopped, when a very venerable-looking tall old clergyman, with long white curly hair and kind blue eyes, opened the door of my carriage, asking if Fräulein H—— was in there. I said Yes, and, shaking hands with me, he told me that he was the clergyman K—— from Bellstädt, my foster-father for the coming year.* He told me to follow him to his carriage, which was waiting outside the station. Although I was not otherwise than pleased with the old pastor's appearance, my heart beat fast that moment; and while Mr. K—— went to enquire about my luggage, I felt such a wish to cry that, in order to restrain my tears, and regardless of the strange coachman who was standing by, I stepped up to the horses and embraced them tenderly, whispering into their sympathetic ears that I was very very unhappy! I think the coachman, fond as he was of his horses, liked my caressing them.

He came up to me, tapped my shoulder familiarly, and asked me in his homely Thuringian dialect, not to be unhappy. "Oh," he said, "my dear Fräulein, about forty young girls have I fetched at this station in these last years; every one was unhappy then, or at least pretended to be so; but oh! how much more unhappy they were when they had to leave this station! And, Fräulein," he continued, "believe in my prophecy:—*you* do not look as if you were going to be the first to leave this place without regret!"

I blessed that simple sincere man with all my heart; and it may be said here that to the very last day of my stay at Bellstädt he and I were good and faithful friends. After half an hour we started. The weather was splendid; and we enjoyed a delicious drive through the fascinating valleys of the Thuringian Forest, till at last our carriage, after having passed a small but pretty village, stopped before the front door of a two-storied house, overgrown with vines and ivy, which lay nestled behind old and shadowy linden-trees. A rather small but neatly-kept garden, with a beautiful green grass-plot, roses and other flowers in beds, was to be seen at the right side of the house; while another bigger one, full of fruit-trees, potatoes, and all the vegetables required in the kitchen, lay behind the house. From this second garden I heard the joyful voices

* *Pflege-Vater* is the name given to the head of the house where the German girl is sent to learn her household duties, and indicates that for the time he has become her guardian.

of girls at play, while a lady, the mistress of the house, kindly greeting me, was standing in the doorway. According to our education, and the courtesy we use towards elderly ladies, I went and kissed her hand; and she in return kissed my forehead, wishing me a most hearty welcome. Then she took me by the hand, and asked my Christian name, telling me at the same time, that all girls in her house were called by their Christian names. After this, we went to my room, where I and two other girls had to dwell. Everything was nice and comfortable, but without luxury. She—"Aunt Mary," as we all had to call her—told me that I had seven companions, and that she hoped I would make friends with them. Then she helped me to unpack my luggage, making a close inspection, to be sure I had everything I wanted. And yes, it was all at hand. There were two winter and two summer dresses, made with short sleeves of dark and useful stuff; besides twelve large dark-blue aprons or pinafores for hard and dirty kitchen-work, twelve white ones for house work, and twelve nice and neat ones for serving at dinner. After having praised my useful things, Aunt Mary smiled at my pretty dresses and hats, which we were allowed to wear on Sundays, for picnics, and other occasions. "You little vanity," she said, kissing me, "come now, I will show you the house and introduce you to your companions."

After dinner, where two of the "Pensionairinnen," as we were called, had served, Mr. K. read out of the Bible, gave us his blessing, and we went to bed, for the next morning had to see us up early! At five, Aunt Mary came to call us; we took our bath, and then one girl helped to comb the other's hair. This—probably because of our German nationality, but assuredly not (as the author of *German Home Life* kindly pretends) in consequence of our never having had our heads washed as children—was very long and strong; and therefore would have taken too much time to comb it out ourselves.

From half-past five in the morning our day was divided in the following manner. The newly-arrived and still stupid girls began with easy work, two and two always working together. Two had to clean the rooms and lamps, and to mend the linen; two worked in the garden, and had to feed the animals; but except during the first month, they were only expected to attend to the poultry. Two had to arrange the dinner, tea and coffee table, and to wash the dishes we used at meals. Two again were busy in the kitchen. All of us had to go every afternoon to milk the cows, and on a wash or ironing-day to take part also in that labour. According to this plan we changed our work every week.

I began my studies. Aunt Mary was the head of all, the minister of the interior and foreign affairs, as we used to say; while four under-ministers supported her in both departments. These four were those girls who had been in her house for six months; and each of the newly-arrived girls was given to the special guardianship of one of these. It would be too detailed if I were to describe every day of my training. I began the first week by cleaning the rooms and the lamps. This, by

the way, is a very unpleasant duty. We were not allowed to complain of any work; and I am glad and proud to say we never did, for we knew "it must be!" The first week is not the worst, for the work is easy. The next begins to be harder; for our backs, quite unaccustomed to bend all day, digging earth, planting flowers, and weeding borders, ached badly in the evening. The third week again is a sort of repose. With a neat coquettish apron pinned upon one's frock, one serves at the meals and washes the dishes, accompanying that monotonous work by cheerful songs. But then, last but not least, that fourth week—oh! I shiver, only thinking of it! I see myself again, standing in the kitchen, peeling my potatoes, preparing the vegetables, and ah! killing the poultry; while my six-months-experienced companion looks at me, pitifully smiling at my tears that I can't restrain, when Aunt Mary for the first time teaches me how—to kill poultry! What I suffered that moment no pen possibly could describe. It was my first kitchen-day. I had just, mournfully looking at my hands, finished my potatoes, when Aunt Mary came in with six pigeons, telling me that I had to kill them. My heart beat impetuously; I went up to her; she took one pigeon; touched its head and—turned it round. "You see that it is simple," she said then; "do it now."

She gave me a white pigeon with dear dark eyes. I held it in my left hand; I looked at it; and oh! everything seemed to turn round with me; I felt as if I could not move one limb. I was silently looking at the pigeon in my hand, wishing myself far, far away in the land where the pepper grows; but suddenly, Aunt Mary shook my arm, saying: "Well, Elizabeth, are we going to stand here all day, dreaming heaven knows about what?"—"One, two, three," she counted with a voice that permitted no disobedience, and one, two, three, and my right hand was holding the poor pigeon's head that I myself in my bitter duty had twirled off. Tears were streaming out of my eyes; my companion had to kill the four other pigeons. While I was spending the dismallest day of my life, the eyes of my dead pigeon followed me everywhere. Even that night was restless; all the pigeons of the world pursued me in my dreams, calling out for revenge on me for their dead sister.

The following weeks brought hard work. To remain in the hot kitchen day after day, was not easy. To wash the greasy crockery was no joke. And then when we had to stand and wash from morning to night at the sheets, table-napkins, and all the body-linen, then afterwards to iron, mangle it, and all that, I assure you that was not just a pleasure for spoiled young ladies. It is the custom in Germany to wash table-linen and sheets as seldom as possible. Indeed, it is even a sign of wealth when one washes these things but four times a year, because it shows that lots of them are possessed by the family. Whether the custom is a nice one or not, there can be no doubt about the work it causes.

As soon as this great wash began, we gave up all but the most important house and kitchen work; and you might have seen us standing

all eight of us round a huge tub, rubbing with soap in hot water the sheets and napkins. Certainly it was severe labour, and my hands bled fast the first evening. But while standing and washing, even if almost tired to death by work so unaccustomed, we tried to sweeten it by cheerful part-songs. When the washing was finished, Carl, the coachman, had to put the horses to the waggon. All the things, heaped up in large white baskets, were put on it, we all got in after, and off it went down to the little river. There the things were unloaded, and each of us, kneeling on a board, rinsed out the linen in the clear flowing water. I dare say that this part of the wash was the most amusing one; whether it was the kneeling at the river, or the happy thought that all would be soon at an end, I am sure I don't know. But we were certainly in high spirits, and Carl, who silently watched us, often had to get out of the way of the shoots of water that we extravagant girls sent at him!

So the weeks went on, each bringing its appointed task, and yet never anything seemed to be too hard. Having once got accustomed to our work, we did it with good temper and love. This was the reason, I think, why the spirit of the house was merry and cheerful. Aunt Mary was our best friend; and in Mr. K—— we admired the real type of a country clergyman. I said that I never found my work too hard; but still there was one which I always did with showers of tears. That, as you can guess, was—killing poultry: ducks, geese, pigeons. I think I killed about three dozen, but I am sure that their sufferings were not half as bad as mine!

After six months' hard work I had learned enough to get a new girl under my care, and there was no roast meat, no vegetable, no pudding or cake I could not cook. Now the pleasure came; for in teaching others I saw for the first time how much I knew.

Perhaps, dear reader, you have had enough of our German Cookery School, and I see many a young lady comfortably leaning back in her arm-chair saying, "Nothing in the world would induce *me* to lead such a dull, hard life! Thank God that I am not a German girl!" Fiddlesticks! Noah's ark! My proud young lady, it is not quite so dull as it seems, and I am sure that after having read what follows of my story, you will understand my saying that the year in the Cookery School was one of the happiest I ever spent.

I said that the place I lived in was a village. It was a dear old place, and I should like to tell you a little more about it. It was situated, as I said before, in the Thuringian Forest, and was full of all the charm a place possesses that is far away from railroads. The village was surrounded by splendid old fir woods, and pleasantly animated by a small, swiftly-running, sun-bright river. The population was made up of middle-sized folk, neither especially good nor yet bad looking, but dressed in a very pretty bright costume. The men wore light-blue trousers and a wide blue blouse; the women short red petticoats, coloured apron, a black velvet bodice, and white short sleeves. Their hair, plaited in about

eight tresses, was coiled about the head, with a red or blue handkerchief twisted over it.

The village contained about twenty-four houses, all (except the Squire's and parson's) with a straw-thatched roof, and on nearly every third roof a stork was nested. Those dear storks; what a pleasure they are to every German heart! It seems as if they belonged to the family, and no greater joy is ever seen on any face, be it young or old, than on the day when the stork, after a long absence, comes home to his old nest, first of all looking into it, and then, convinced that everything is in order, beginning to clatter with his bill, giving greeting to all his friends who are standing about beneath, waving their pocket-handkerchiefs in welcome. We have a sort of divine adoration for our storks; a stork's nest on a roof is called the greatest sign of luck. No one ever thinks of killing a stork, and if this happens, the crime is punished with from seven to ten years of imprisonment.

Never in my life but once have I heard of a stork being wilfully killed. It happened in this village, and often, indeed, have I heard the event talked about. The story is so sad and strange that I should like to tell it here. It took place as follows. A young man, out of mere boyish wantonness, shot the hen-stork some days before they began their long and troublesome journey to Africa. Winter was gone; the stork's nest was again without snow, and the warm sun and mild spring air made people look forward to the arrival of the storks. At last they came. All the nests, except the one which through human cruelty had lost its mistress, were soon full of eggs which the hen birds were busy hatching. One day, a stork which was flying alone towards the village, came to the nest upon the parsonage roof. The female stork, unmindful of approaching danger, was sitting silently in her nest alone, when the strange bird swooped passionately down, and began a furious fight with her. She defended her nest, her eggs, herself, as bravely as she could, but at last her strength failed, and the stranger stork succeeded in hacking the eggs to pieces and throwing them out of the nest. Then, but not till then, he seemed satisfied with what he had done, and with a savage rattling in his throat, he flew away. The villagers, meanwhile, stood watching this horrible scene without being able to help the injured mother bird. This story shows curiously that the feelings and passions both of men and animals are very much alike. The poor stork, pining for his mate who had been murdered, sees another in her full maternal happiness. Mad jealousy comes over him, and being himself unhappy, he wants to make others unhappy too. The wretched bird, it may be added, was never seen again after the tragedy. Most probably he put a speedy end to his own miserable life.

We had not much society in our village. There was only the Squire's family, consisting of a father, mother, three grown-up sons and four young men who were being taught farming. The Sundays were our usual days for meeting. Sometimes we were all invited to the Squire's

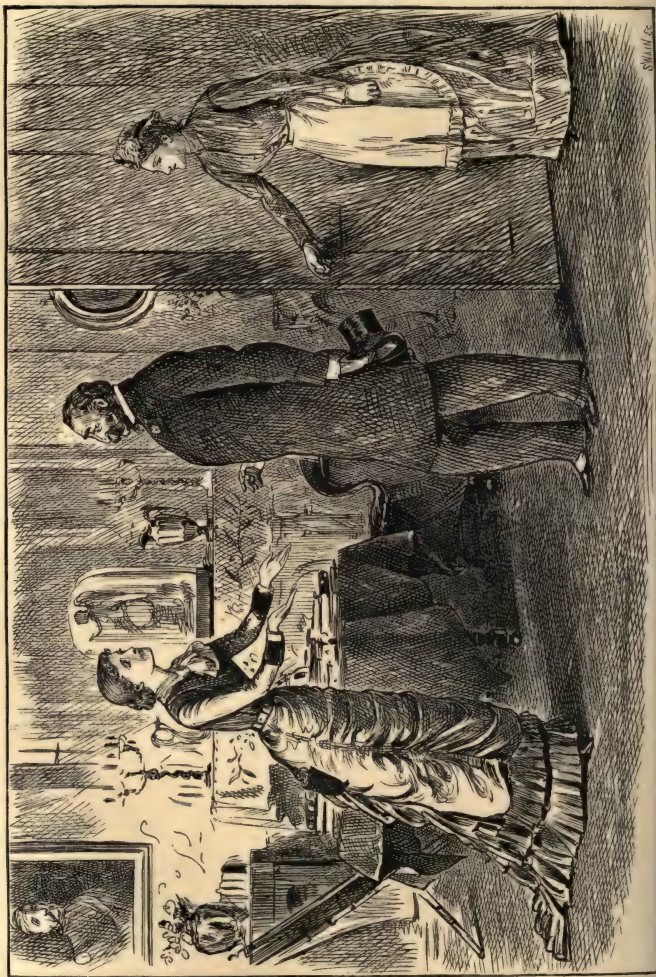
house, or else they used to call on us. The greatest pleasure for us girls was of course to go there, for then we had no work to do, and could enjoy our holiday. And oh, how well we knew how to do that! The old people left us to ourselves, giving us full leave to do whatever we liked. The dining-room was at our disposal; and, by the by, this noble old room is worth while making acquaintance with. It was in the old part of the house, built about two hundred years ago. The walls and ceiling were panelled with wood, admirably carved. An old-fashioned chandelier that with the brightness of its lights had served at many happy and sad family occurrences, hung in the middle of the room, while the walls were decorated with magnificent horns of stags and deer, shot long ago by ancestors of the house. To this room we went; a cupboard containing an old hand-organ was opened; and while one played this oft-used and obedient instrument, the rest of us danced vales and galops. Sometimes we had games or acted plays; and when tired of all these, it was pleasant to sit or walk about arm-in-arm, under the moon-lighted oak-tree that from generation to generation had secretly hearkened to the ever-old and ever-new whispering of young and hopeful love.

I see, dear friends, you don't trust your eyes any longer, reading about love, real poetical love in a Cooking School, where you expected that sentimentality and higher feelings would dry up in the hot atmosphere of the kitchen. Yet if you will promise not to tell about it, I may confess to you that my best friend and companion in the school, while she was there, engaged herself secretly to the Squire's eldest son, and she is now a happy wife. It must be admitted that not every love-story which began there, ended so happily. I know of one young man, who once under the oak-tree asked a certain young lady to become his wife, but she refused, pretending that long before she came there her heart had been given away irrevocably.

Again the last day of April arrived; my year was at an end. I had to leave my dear school, Aunt Mary, my companions. I did not dare to think of it.

But the day appeared, and again the carriage was waiting at the door; and, embracing them all with tears of gratitude and love in my eyes, I drove away, easily reading in my driver's good-natured smiling face, "I told you that *you* would not be the first to leave the place without regret!"

E. H.



Fob the Debt.

CHAPTER XIII.

A PROPOSAL.



ON reaching the moors a council was held to decide upon the best site for lunch. Mabel proposed a hill at a little distance, and was of course seconded by George and supported by Lawley, on the ground that it would give Miss Masters a fine view all round. Miss Masters, however, being inclined for lunch and disinclined to walk a foot further than she could help, thought it would be

too far for the gentlemen to carry the hampers, and that the view of the hill was probably more picturesque than the view from it. Accordingly they pitched their tent where they were and proceeded to unpack the hampers, which Lawley, after his manner, had crammed with enough provision for forty people.

"Do you think there will be enough?" he asked George doubtfully, as he handed him out a fourth fowl.

"There will hardly be one apiece, but we may eke it out with the lamb and tongue. Good heavens! What an array of bottles!"

"They do look rather a lot," said Lawley, himself somewhat dismayed, "but except the beer all are single bottles. I didn't know what wine Miss Masters drank. There's just one bottle of each," he said, in a survey of the corks, "of port, sherry, champagne, claret, hock, brandy, mint sauce, and custard."

"I drink custard, Mr. Lawley, thank you," said Mabel (who, by the way, had become a teetotaller with Barney). "As for Aunt, she hardly ever touches anything but port, sherry, champagne, claret, and hock."

"My dear!"

"I didn't know you cared for brandy or mint sauce, Aunt."

"The brandy was for Squire and another of the children," said Lawley apologetically.

"I am quite sorry, Mr. Lawley, you took the trouble to provide so many kinds of wine for *me*. I hardly ever take any wine but sherry," said Miss Masters, less to acknowledge Mr. Lawley's special consideration for her than to disabuse him of the impression of her drinking habits she felt Mabel's wild words must have given. She sat upon her camp-stool surveying through her eyeglass, critically at first, but at last complacently, the various dishes Mabel and George were arranging as Lawley handed them out of the hamper. Her view of the lunch was so satisfactory that she was positively charmed with the scenery. "I wouldn't have missed this for anything. I really must take that bit."

"Which, Aunt? The wing?" for George was busy upon a fowl.

Mabel, from intercourse with the wooden Miss Roxby, had got into that way of "uttering her jests with a sad brow," which, as we know from both Cicero and Shakspeare, makes even a thin joke effective.

"My dear," replied her aunt with some scorn in her voice for Mabel's prosaic absorption in the luncheon, "I was speaking of sketching that beautiful bit of hillside. Where are your eyes, Mabel? You'll never be a painter if you think only of lunch with such a view before you."

"Have you eyes?"

Could you on this fair mountain leave to feed
And batten on this moor?"

quoted George, pointing to the hill and the moor, and looking into Mabel's face with a mixed expression of amusement and admiration.

"It was Miss Mabel Masters who wished to feed on the mountain, I thought," said Lawley, "while Miss Masters was 'the gentle lady wedded to the Moor.' You preferred to lunch here, didn't you, Miss Masters?"

From this bewildering pedantry Miss Masters could at least gather confirmation of her suspicion of Lawley's designs upon Mabel. It was plain that, while Mr. Kneeshaw sided with herself, Mr. Lawley sided with Mabel, as she might have expected.

"Yes; I don't think I could get a better point of view to sketch from. I hope you will help me after lunch with your advice, Mr. Lawley," said that wily chaperon, mindful of the danger of allowing Mr. Lawley from her side for a moment. No doubt it would have been better still to have tied Mabel to her apron-strings; but that young person, not having the least idea of the danger to be guarded against, was little likely to be as amenable as Mr. Lawley to discipline.

Lunch, then, being over, to which Miss Masters did the most ample justice, the distraction of the scenery notwithstanding, the unhappy Mr. Lawley, who meditated having a pipe in retirement, was summoned to her side, shown her drawings, asked his opinion of each, and his

advice as to the standpoint for the one in hand, and as to every point in its progress. Lawley loved tobacco, and did not love the society of silly old ladies; and only a perfect host and gentleman could have stood as he stood the severe and continuous strain upon his manners for two mortal hours. Meantime Mabel was amusing the children with such mild games as the invalids could manage, until they were tired (as they soon were) of movement, and set to to make daisy chains. Daisies were to be had only on the skirts of the moor, and on the hill at its edge, and here Mabel, Mary Ann, and George gathered them for the others. Lawley was somewhat comforted to see Kneeshaw reduced to a sillier slavery than his own, little thinking that the daisies were flowers of paradise to George. When the three had reached the hill and wandered round its base to the other side, George suggested that Mary Ann had better carry back in her apron what they had gathered.

"They'll have nothing to go on with by this," he said considerably. "You can come back when you want more, Mary Ann, and we shall have another lot for you."

Mary Ann, however, preferred to make a daisy chain of her own out of the superabundance of daisies already gathered, and did not return for more. George was madly in love. He forgot everything and every one but Mabel. The mere touch of her hand in one of the childish games doubled the beating of his heart, and sent his blood in so mad a whirl to his brain as to dizzy it. He walked after her as in a dream, gathering the daisies she trod on and treasuring one she dropped. "*Amare et sapere vix Deo conceditur.*" He was only a little madder than most with that delicious delirium we all have, or ought to have, endured and enjoyed; and only those who have lost their memory or have little in their lives worth remembering can be so pitiable as to pity him, or so despicable as to despise him.

"Let us sit down a moment, the view is lovely from here," said George, pointing to a little hollow in the hill from which they could see nothing, but would there be unseen themselves.

Mabel obeyed him with her heart fluttering like a newly caught bird. She knew now what George felt for her as well as if he had expressed it in words—better than words could express it. How? We cannot tell. What we call instinct is made up of a thousand accumulated experiences and impressions and associations, so atomic as to baffle analysis. And a girl's instinct is quicker and truer than a man's, because she is more observant; but she can no more account for her unerring instinct than a marksman for his unerring aim, which comes not only of a keen eye, but of numberless minute observations and inferences that have been made unconsciously. We cannot tell the grounds, then, of Mabel's instinctive inference of George's feeling for her, nor shall we say how much she was helped by analogy to such an inference by the response she found to that feeling in her own heart. We are not going to pry into that sacred chamber which she now blushed to look into herself;

for in a heart like Mabel's the purest love when first detected "trembles like a guilty thing surprised."

George seated himself beside her, but a little backward, that he might gaze inoffensively on her face. There was an awkward silence, for while George was wrapped in his worship, Mabel could think of nothing to say that would not sound forced or foolish. She reviewed and rejected one topic after another till the tension became intolerable.

"I mustn't forget my painting lesson, or Aunt will think me more hopeless than ever."

"Don't go!" cried George, as she essayed to rise, seizing her hand, and looking and speaking as if life and death were in the balance.

Shall we print in cold blood his headlong, incoherent, passionate appeal?

Be wise : not easily forgiven
Are those who, setting wide the doors that bar
The secret bridal chambers of the heart,
Let in the day.

"I couldn't help it," said George desperately, with a sudden drop to bathos. He had put it to the touch and thought he had lost it all, because Mabel sat silent with averted face. Yet she had not withdrawn her hand, though George once, at the height of his vehement pleading, had so pressed it that her mother's ring bit into the next finger. But intense longing is sometimes the father not of belief, but of doubt, and George thought he had thrown and lost. "You are angry with me?" in a voice of despair. Mabel turned her ferocious gaze upon him, and even George was satisfied with all it expressed.

"Don't; please, don't!" she said, in answer to what next proceeded from his lips, uttered close to her ear, but not addressed to that organ; for the reaction from despair carried George over considerably to the other side. In fact, Mabel had to disengage her hand to defend her face.

"It is bleeding!" he cried.

"It's a bad omen," Mabel replied lightly. "I have given you my hand, and see how you have crushed it!"

George cried out upon his brutality, and bent over the little wounded hand lying lost in his own great palm as a mother over her sick child, and kissed and soothed it and was altogether lovelorn and silly. It would be hard to find two persons with a keener sense of the ridiculous than these two ridiculous creatures, yet neither was in the least disposed to laugh at the other! We old folk of course can laugh at and—envy them, longing in vain to exchange our cynical sense for their happy insanity. For the laugh is not on our side after all. Our wisdom may be so ripe

Possent ut juvenes visere fervidi,
Multo non sine risu,
Dilapsam in cineres facem.

So these two prattled silly things with a sublime meaning—bubbles,

rising from profound depths. Shall we print their prattle? As well gather the drops of which the rainbow was composed after they had fallen from heaven—their glory was not their own, but of the sun which transfigured them. Let us leave them to themselves for the single, sweet, swift hour that seems to glide from them in a moment,

Like the snowfall in the river,
A moment white, then melts for ever.

“Please, Mr. Kneeshaw;” George started aside like a broken bow. He had been sitting very close to Mabel, probably to take advantage of the shadow of her sunshade, for his head was under it. They were hidden in a cup-like hollow of the hill, only visible to any one who stood, as Mary Ann stood now, directly in front.

“You’ve come for more daisies, Mary Ann,” said George in the confused way a man speaks when first roused from a vivid dream.

“Please, sir, we are agoing home.”

“Home!” cried George, looking at his watch. “By Jove! it’s five o’clock!”

Mary Ann, like most poor people’s children—especially if they are delicate children—was a very precocious young person, and drew her own shrewd conclusions from George’s attitude and Mabel’s scarlet face. These conclusions and their grounds she afterwards imparted to Mrs. MacGucken, much to that matron’s relief, for she had great searchings of heart about this picnic in general, and the invitation of Miss Mabel Masters to it in particular. “The master,” she was often heard to say, “was that soft that any one who had the mind might whip him up as easy as a handkercher off a hedge”—an unflattering comparison suggested by her losses of linen left to bleach near the highway.

On this occasion, however, Mr. Lawley was kept quite clear of temptation—unless Miss Masters is to be considered in that incredible light. That sagacious and cautious chaperon never let him stray farther from her side than to the children, and was so absorbed by her suspicions of him that it never occurred to her to think anything of Mabel’s stroll with George. She saw the two go off together with Mary Ann in their company, and, not having noticed the child’s return in the interval, she was in no wise disquieted on seeing the three return, still together, after over an hour’s absence. Lawley, though his thoughts were little given to running on such subjects, could not help putting the right construction on this otherwise unaccountable desertion of him and his invalids by Mabel and George. When it came near the time to return, therefore, he thought it more considerate to send Mary Ann in search of them than to surprise them himself; and he felt rather proud of his discretion when he saw the expressions on the faces of the three as they hurried back—Mabel looking still conscious, George confused, and Mary Ann disgustingly knowing.

"My dear Aunt; how quickly you have done it! It's so like, too!"

"Like what, dear? That's a sketch of Derwentwater. I didn't know you had been to the Lakes."

"We shall just have time for a pipe, Kneeshaw."

"I hope Miss Masters doesn't object to the smell of tobacco," said George, speaking to the aunt but looking at the niece.

"Which king, Bezonian?" grunted Lawley.

"I don't in the least object to the scent of tobacco in the open air," said Miss Masters graciously, admiring, with her head drawn back and on one side, the last consummate touch she had given her sketch. George, having looked in vain for Mabel to interchange one last glance with him (for that young woman, conscious of Mr. Lawley's cynical scrutiny, would not lift her eyes from her aunt's sketch), was hauled off a dejected prisoner in Lawley's custody.

As they walked away together George roused himself from his delicious reveries by a prodigious effort. "Well, what have you been doing?" he asked coolly.

"You may well ask. I've been admiring the works of the old Masters," growled Lawley, giving vent through this ungallant pleasantry to his long-gathering irritation. "You've been going in for the modern, I should say."

George was silent for a moment, wondering whether Mabel would object to his confiding their secret to Lawley. Having determined this point in his own mind, he said, when they had seated themselves, and Lawley had taken out and filled his pipe, "Lawley, she has accepted me!"

"Phew!" whistled Lawley, who, being just in the act of lighting his pipe, dropped the fusee in amazement. "Got to that! Why, how long has it been going on?"

"Oh, some time," said George dreamily.

"What! before to-day?"

"Before to-day!"

"Then you meant to propose when you refused St. George's?" asked Lawley, rather bewildered.

George thus forced back to face his night-long struggle and his heroic resolution of a few hours since, which seemed now so dim and far away, was confounded at this presentation of his folly and feebleness.

"No, I didn't," he said desperately; "I meant this morning to give up both her and the living."

"But what about her? If she accepted you to-day she must have cared for you before this morning."

Here was a consideration for a misogynist to urge! But Lawley had been extraordinarily struck with Mabel.

"I didn't know she cared for me, and I didn't know I cared so madly for her. I was carried off my feet, Lawley." And then he raved frantically about Mabel like a boy, as he was.

Lawley listened to his wild rhapsody with more sympathy than he showed. "By the way," he said, when George paused for breath, "we mustn't forget to post this letter of yours," taking the refusal of St. George's from his pocket.

"Lawley, it's cruel of you! God! what must I do?"

"I'll tell you what you must not do. You mustn't drag a girl like that into hopeless poverty, or a hopeless engagement either. If you must give up the Church and struggle for a living God knows how, you must give her up. It won't do to fling yourself out of the boat and drag her to drown with you."

"I *can't* give her up," groaned George.

"You could give her up this morning, and may be in the same mind to-morrow morning," said Lawley, in a tone of irritation that seemed to George uncalled-for and unaccountable. The fact was not merely that Lawley, being himself "a still strong man," was impatient of feeble vacillation, but that he felt indignant that the happiness of a girl like Miss Masters should be at the mercy of such vacillation. Perhaps, at the bottom of his heart, this cynic and misogynist grudged George the brilliant conquest he seemed to make and hold so heedlessly.

"We had better get back, hadn't we?" said George, with sudden sullenness, repenting bitterly of having confided his sacred secret to such sacrilegious hands.

"Look here, old fellow," said Lawley, with a frank friendliness which was irresistible, and putting his hand on George's knee. "It's no use being angry with me for looking at this thing from the girl's side. She's not like other girls. She'll not accept a man as she'd accept a partner for a waltz, and change partners as lightly;" speaking with a bitterness which was the irritation of an old wound that still throbbed at times. "When you do come across a girl like that, it's not fair to make it a toss-up whether you propose to her or not. It *was* a toss-up you know," nodding at George.

Lawley praise any girl so! And that girl Mabel! He was the prince of confidants!

"I tell you, Lawley, I didn't know how I worshipped her. It seems a whole year since this morning. And as for her caring for me, I couldn't have believed it. I can hardly believe it yet;" looking back to where she stood, as if for reassurance that it wasn't a dream. "But give her up now! Can't you understand that a man might give up a lottery ticket of one in ten thousand who wouldn't give up the prize for the world?"

"Well, then, if you are going to stick to her you must stick to the Church, and to this living, too," said Lawley, coolly lighting a match and holding George's letter over it till it was consumed.

George watched the *auto-da-fé* in silence, but with a troubled face.

"You'll thank me for this before you're a year older," continued Lawley.

"I don't know," said George doubtfully.

"Are you glad I made you come with us to-day?"

"Glad!"

"You see what a difference a few hours have made in your mind."

"It's not the time that has made the difference."

"Of course it's not the time that has made the difference. It's change of circumstances. And a change of circumstances will make all the difference in the world in your views. You take what I must call a morbid view of your position in the Church now—I don't see how you could help taking it. You got let in for one of the worst curacies in England—one of the worst curacies in England, I should say," repeated Lawley deliberately. "Dr. Clancy may have been a very good man for converting the heathen to Christianity—I don't know about that—but a better man for converting Christians to heathenism you could hardly find in England. It's not easy for any thinking man to listen to him in or out of the pulpit for a year without his faith being shaken. Besides, he made you as uncomfortable as he could; put you into the most galling harness, and took care that it should gall; and when you were disheartened and disgusted and in the worst frame of mind for forming a fair judgment of anything, you had this burlesque of religion put before you at every turn as the thing you had sworn to hold and teach. Every parson you met was appointed by Clancy, and echoed his ideas of a clergyman's obligations, till you came to

Think the rustic cackle of your bourg
The murmur of the world.

It will be a different thing altogether when you have a church of your own, and are no longer worried, bullied, and muzzled. You can then say out what you believe and what you don't believe, and can leave the things you doubt alone. You'll get a safety-valve to blow off steam and ease the boiler, and you'll come back to a healthy state of mind. You'll find then that you believe more than you thought, and that others believe less than you thought, and that you have at least as good a right in the Church as a Methodist like Clancy or a Romanist like Gant."

There was some truth and much plausibility in Lawley's way of putting the thing, but it would hardly have convinced and converted George that morning. Now, however, he could no longer look at things by that "dry light" of which Bacon speaks—*ψυχὴ ἑνρὴ σοφωράτη*—but by a light "which was infused and drenched in his affections."

"I shall accept it," said George, rising suddenly.

"Of course you'll accept it," Lawley replied, also rising and putting back his pipe into its case. "You're the luckiest fellow I ever heard of. Here you are, a young fellow of twenty-five, without interest and with no great good looks or brains, and you get in one day the best living in Wefton and a girl too good for a duke!"

Here, of course, George took up the wondrous tale, and as they walked back went wild with praise of Mabel, till Lawley had to quote, from Bon Gaultier,—

" 'Tis the most infernal bore
Of all the bores I know,
To have a friend who's lost his heart
A short time ago."

On their return they found the horses to, Miss Masters seated in the waggonette, and Mabel lifting in the last of the children. George was just in time, under the pretext of helping her in, to press her hand, and to convey through that dumb alphabet of love all the unutterable things he felt in the long interval since he had last seen her. During the drive home Mabel was shy and embarrassed; George, since he could not bring himself to speak to her as a mere acquaintance, was silent but happy in the mere touch of her dress; while Lawley amazed them both by an extraordinary flow of talk and spirits. Mabel's shyness and embarrassment not only gave him courage, but suggested that the greatest kindness he could do her would be to take all the talk to himself. Now Lawley, when he was in the vein and chose to exert himself, was a most brilliant talker. He had a keen and caustic wit, dry humour, and a memory, like an old curiosity shop, stored with all manner of out-of-the-way and interesting things. Mabel heard him with the most flattering interest and admiration, while George was more than once drawn out of his delicious reveries to listen. All three were so absorbed, that the sudden pulling-up of the carriage at The Grange was their first warning of the close of the journey.

"Here we are!" said Lawley, with something like a sigh. Mabel turned suddenly towards George to look her farewell. George, however, had no idea of being put off with a look, however loving.

"Would you kindly allow me to write a note in your house, to post on my way home?" asked he of Miss Masters, whom the sudden pull-up had waked out of an uneasy sleep.

"Certainly, Mr. Kneeshaw. Perhaps Mr. Lawley, too, would come in and have a cup of tea?" with, however, a doubtful look at the children. Mr. Lawley politely declined, on the plea of having to see his charges home; and so the party broke up.

CHAPTER XIV.

GUARDIANS.

GEORGE whispered to Mabel as he handed her out, "I must see you for a moment;" and Mabel, speaking upon this hint, said to her aunt as they entered the house—

"Mr. Kneeshaw might write his note in the nursery, Aunt, while tea is getting ready."

"The nursery" was the study of the gynecium: first a nursery, then a schoolroom, now Mabel's sanctum, it had kept its original name.

"Very well, my dear; you can show Mr. Kneeshaw into it," said this incomparable chaperon.

"Is this the nursery? What a pretty room!" It was not a pretty room in itself, but books, pictures, flowers, nicknacks, arranged neither primly nor confusedly, but with a "sweet disorder, a wild civility," redeemed its natural plainness.

"Yes, this is the nursery. You're looking for the broken toys? There have been plenty of them, but they're hidden away," said Mabel, with an undercurrent of deep and sad meaning in her voice and in her eyes. "It has always been my own room ever since I can remember. *My very own*, you know."

"My very own!" echoed George, with another meaning expressed through his eyes, and through his hands holding both of hers, and through his lips pressed passionately to hers.

"Is this what you wanted me for?" making her escape to a table where, with her back turned to him to hide her burning blushes, she opened a desk for him to write at. George followed, and put his arm round her, and told her for the first time of the offer of the living, and showed her Mr. Pickles' letter.

"What does he mean by saying, 'I have only just learned the obligation I am under to you for saving my son's life'?"

"He thought I was knocked down by accident."

"Weren't you?"

Then George had to explain how the thing had been, and Mabel learned for the first time her hero's heroism, not merely in risking his life to save that of the worthless Clarence Pickles, but in leaving that gentleman's account of the affair uncontradicted. Indeed, this contemptuous magnanimity of silence struck Mabel as more noble than the rescue itself, which it was a mere matter of course that her hero should attempt.

"Bayard!" she said jestingly, but showing her earnest admiration through her shining eyes.

"Vice Barney dismissed," laughed George. "But shall we accept it, dearest?" asking the question for the opportunity it gave of this delightful identification of their interests. It also gave him an opening to speak of their marriage as contingent on his induction into the living; but Mabel put this startling subject aside to speak on another that was uppermost in her mind. To her secrecy seemed deceit, and she could not feel happy in her engagement until her father knew and approved of it. And yet she had a miserable misgiving that her father would disapprove of it, and that it would be another of the broken toys of her life to be hidden away. George, when she expressed her scruples to him, fell in at once with her wish, as he himself, from a feeling he would not face, was eager to rivet irrevocably their engagement.

Accordingly it was arranged that he should have the fateful interview with Colonel Masters that evening, if possible. Then the pair relapsed, after this lucid interval, into delirium, from which they were roused by Miss Masters calling for Mabel.

"There! Tea is ready!" cried Mabel, in dismay; "and you haven't written your note, and I haven't taken my things off. What will Aunt think?"

"She'll think the tea cold"—which was precisely what she did think. She was simply disgusted at being kept waiting. Even when all went well with her, and she was in the best temper possible, she hadn't much thought to spare to any one else; but upon the least discomfort she shrank into her shell altogether.

"What a time you've taken to get ready, Mabel," she said peevishly. "And Mr. Kneeshaw hasn't written his note yet, I suppose. I'm sure he'd not wish us to wait tea for him. Shall I send him a cup into the nursery?"

This happy thought was welcomed by Mabel, who did not care to take her aunt into confidence as to the reason or result of George's interview with her father. George could go to him direct from the nursery, where she would await his return and report.

"Jane could take it in to him," urged Miss Masters.

"I think I shall take it myself," said Mabel, looking as unconscious as she could, with such little success that even a man would have taken in the situation at a glance. Miss Masters' only thought, however, was that it was undignified in Mabel to attend upon Mr. Kneeshaw.

"My dear, I think it would look better if Jane took it in."

But Mabel, without arguing the point, proceeded to prepare a tray, and as the matter was of slight importance to Miss Masters compared with her having her own tea at once and in comfort, Mabel was allowed to take it to George without further remonstrance.

"I was just coming," said George.

"I thought it better you should go from here to see my father," said Mabel, with a tremor in her voice. She felt that the happiness of her life would be decided in a few minutes.

"He'll give his consent, dearest," said George, speaking assuredly, but looking up interrogatively into her wistful eyes.

"I don't know," she answered tremulously.

"But if not?" he asked, clasping both her hands in his, and appealing to her as for life.

"If not," she faltered, with a childlike expression of piteous helplessness in her face—"If not, you must help me to do my duty, George."

"My darling, I can't give you up," he cried, rising and straining her to his breast.

She lay passive in his arms a moment, thinking it might be a farewell embrace; and then, disengaging herself with a smile that shone

through tears, said, "It mayn't be good-bye after all, you know;" and then, after a pause, "I shall ask him to see you now," she said, and was gone.

"Father, Mr. Kneeshaw wishes to see you." Colonel Masters was sitting solitary over his wine.

"Mr. Kneeshaw? Who's he?"

"One of the curates of the parish church."

"What does he want? At this hour, too."

"Shall I ask him to call to-morrow morning?"

"What does he want?" he asked again petulantly; and then, after a pause, which Mabel didn't fill, "No; I'd better get it done with at once, whatever it is. Tell Jane to show him in."

"Here, Father?"

"Yes, here. It's a subscription, I suppose."

This was not encouraging. Mabel returned to George pale and dejected, but trying to look cheerful. "Come," she said, with rather a wan smile. "You'll be patient and forbearing," she turned to say entreatingly, before they entered the dining-room together. George nodded with a smile, though his heart rather failed him. This lion that guarded his Una must be rather a savage beast. Yet Mabel's warning was uncalled for. Colonel Masters was brutal only at home, but exquisitely polite to strangers. He prided himself on being a gentleman, and he knew that gentlemanliness obliged him to be courteous to every one but those of his own household, and to be specially gentle with women, children, and clergymen. No doubt he lost his self-command when he lost his temper, but under ordinary circumstances he was punctiliously and even painfully polite.

"Mr. Kneeshaw, Father."

How do you do, Mr. Kneeshaw? Pray take a seat. Mabel, tell Jane to bring another glass." Colonel Masters was favourably impressed with George's appearance. In the first place, he didn't look a clergyman, for, like his friend Lawley, he was ritualistic enough to express his disbelief in sacerdotalism through his dress, which was little distinguishable from that of a layman; and, in the second place, he was a perfect gentleman in appearance and bearing.

After a glass had been brought for George, and nervously filled and sipped, and after a few common-place remarks on common-place matters, there fell an awkward silence, which grew more difficult to break the longer it lasted. "Colonel Masters," George at last blurted out, "you will be surprised at my calling upon you, at such an hour, but the fact is I—I—proposed to-day to Miss Masters, and she has accepted me, subject to your approval." George had arranged and repeated aloud to himself in the nursery a gradual and most diplomatic approach to this delicate subject, and this headlong plunge was the result! Colonel Masters set down untasted the glass he had half raised to his lips. "With Miss Masters!" he exclaimed. He had for a moment an idea that

George meant his sister. But, no; this was not possible. He must mean Mabel.

"Mr. Kneeshaw, do you know her age?"

It was now George's turn to think the aunt was in question. He could not help being more amused than enraged at this revolting misunderstanding, and exclaimed in turn, with an irresistible smile, "Her age! Your daughter's age?"

"Yes," replied the Colonel, to George's amazement, not disconcerted in the least; "my daughter's age. You must have known, Mr. Kneeshaw, that she was little more than a child; yet you put this thing into her head!"

Was it possible, thought the bewildered George, that Mabel, with a mind and body so superbly developed, was only fourteen or fifteen years of age? He had heard of the precocious mental and bodily development of Indian-born children; could Mabel be a singular instance of this singular precocity?

"I hope you'll excuse the question, Colonel Masters; but how old is your daughter?"

Colonel Masters was puzzled in his turn. How old was Mabel? By an intricate calculation, made upon a comparison of the dates of his going to India, of his first furlough, etc., he found, to his utter amazement, that Mabel must be nineteen, and might be twenty-one. Upon this confounding discovery, his first thought was, as usual, of himself, and of what to him was the sorest of subjects—*his* age, which seemed to hurry on by a kind of geometric progression—each year so much shorter than the last—*crescit eundo*. His next thought was how to extricate himself from the rather absurd position he had taken up without compromising his dignity.

"You must allow us elders to have different ideas from yours of youth, Mr. Kneeshaw," he said, evading, of course, a direct answer to George's question. "I daresay we are behind the age, but we think our daughters should not marry earlier than their mothers before them." (Mabel's poor mother, by the way, had been married at eighteen.) "But, even putting that point aside, Mr. Kneeshaw," continued Colonel Masters, with an air of much magnanimity, "you are yourself very young—only just entered the Church, I should say," looking interrogatively at George, who nodded acquiescence. "Now the Church is a very honourable profession—a most honourable profession—but a very precarious profession. Promotion in the Church, I need not tell you, always depends on some one beside a man's self, and on something beside his merits. Indeed, it seems to me that in the Church the best men are always the last promoted, and the silliest, like froth, get to the top at once. Not a promising look-out for *you*, Mr. Kneeshaw," with a complimentary bow.

"I have strong confirmation of your view of Church preferment in my pocket," laughed George, with new hope; "it's a letter from Mr. Pickles, offering me the living of St. George's."

"Indeed! A good living, Mr. Kneeshaw?"

"He says it will probably be seven hundred pounds a year."

Colonel Masters would have given way at once if he hadn't made such a foolish fuss about Mabel's youth. He knew as little of his daughter's character as he knew of her age, and he had no doubt at all that she would marry Mr. Kneeshaw, whether he gave his consent or not. Besides, she was as likely as not to fancy some parson or other, and Mr. Kneeshaw was much above the average parson of Colonel Masters' acquaintance in bearing, appearance, and prospects. He didn't seem like a man either who would dun him for money if he needed it, while he was unlikely to need it with a good living to start with. This was a great point with the Colonel. But, on the other hand, who was to read for him? That was the main thing to be thought of, after all. He had got used to Mabel, and was not likely to find one who would suit him so well. Besides, he would have now to pay for such help. It was disgusting how selfish people were. After all the expense and trouble he had been at to bring this girl up, just when she was beginning to be of some little use to him, she was ready to leave him for the first man that asks her. Still, as she was sure to leave him some time for some one, it was as well she didn't fall into the hands of an adventurer, who would have been always trying to extort money from him. On these grounds the Colonel would have given his ungracious approval of their engagement, if he had not committed himself against it on the absurd plea of Mabel's extreme youth. At this point of his meditations, which passed in a moment through his brain, a way out of the difficulty suggested itself, by which he would be rid at once, and once for all, of the business.

"I think this is rather a woman's matter, Mr. Kneeshaw," he said, in a tone of some contempt. "My sister will be fitter to deal with it than I. If you will permit me, I shall refer you to her."

"If I can get her approval, I may hope for yours?" asked George, relieved, and indeed overjoyed, but contemptuous of Colonel Masters' contempt.

"Certainly," said the Colonel, decisively, dismissing the subject as having not much in it to begin with, and being now thoroughly threshed out. He passed at once to topics of some importance, in which, however, George showed but a languid interest. He rose, as soon as he could, without ungraciousness, and, making an apology for intruding at such an unseasonable hour, hurried away to report to Mabel.

Meantime Mabel, after going through the form of taking tea with her aunt, had returned to the nursery, where she paced up and down in a suspense that would have shocked Miss Roxby. Indeed, that correct person would have disapproved of the facility, not less than of the intensity, of Mabel's affections, and in this, perhaps, some of our readers may agree with her. We must again remind them that Mabel, since her mother's death, had been famishing for love, as her father simply

tolerated her, and Miss Murdoch was as stern as steel. It was their indifference which made George's conquest of her seemingly so easy. When he, seeming "scarce other than her own ideal knight," fell down and worshipped her, the gratitude she felt at first slipped easily and soon into a warmer feeling. And this feeling had lain so long fallow that it yielded now all the richer harvest. Thus George got more than the reversion, which was the most the Duke looked for from Olivia :—

She that hath a heart of that fine frame
To pay this debt of love but to a father,
How will she love, when the rich golden shaft
Hath killed the flock of all affections else
That live in her !

The affection which had been chilled by her father and aunt now broke into blossom all the more luxuriant from the long winter that had kept it back. Her heart was like a tree that struggles up in the gloom of a dense forest, which cannot put forth a single shoot till it gains the sun at last ; but then its whole pent-up life bursts out together, and it is crowned like a palm, all its glory at the top.

"Well ?" she asked, as she met George at the nursery door. George at first reassured her only by his look, for he was eager to set at rest an anxiety of his own. Putting his hand under her chin and lifting up her face towards him, as if she were a child, he asked in turn, "How old are you ?"

"How old ? Oh, I'm ever so old. I shall be twenty in October," she said, with the regretful air of a septuagenarian.

"Twenty ! Thank God !" said George, affecting to laugh off as a joke a relief that was real. "I thought you were an infant phenomenon. Your father seems to think you about twelve."

"He said I was too young ?"

"He said you were little more than a child ; but in the end he referred me to your aunt."

Mabel knew her father's utter contempt for her aunt, to whom he would certainly not refer anything he thought of the least importance, and she was provoked into saying, with a bitterness unusual in her, "He refers all little housekeeping matters to aunt."

George hastened to heal the hurt.

"I'm not sure that he didn't think it was your aunt's hand I was asking for. He seemed rather hazy about it, and thought it safest to refer me to her," he said, laughing.

This irresistible joke cleared the cloud off Mabel's face.

"Aunt will make the same mistake, if you don't mind. I don't think I shall trust you in a *tête-à-tête* with her."

"Let us go together, then, and ask her blessing on our knees. Is she still in the drawing-room ?"

"Yes ; she expects you there when you have finished your letter. I needn't announce you this time."

"You'll not come?"

"Come? No. I should be *de trop*. Besides, I have heard your proposal speech already at the rehearsal this afternoon." George's answer was not in words, and Miss Masters had to wait some time longer in the drawing-room before he appeared.

"It must have been a foreign letter, Mr. Kneeshaw. When my brother was in India it took me hours to send him all the news."

"No, indeed, Miss Masters, it was a letter to Weston—to Mr. Pickles, accepting a living he was good enough to offer me." George was determined to begin at the right end this time.

"I hope it's a good living, Mr. Kneeshaw."

"It will be about seven hundred pounds a year and a house. It is the new church of St. George's."

Miss Masters' opinion of George went up at a bound. "I'm sure I congratulate you heartily, Mr. Kneeshaw. It's very quick promotion."

"And yet I'm not satisfied, Miss Masters. I came to ask you for something more."

"Me!" If George had given the old lady time to get her thoughts together, she would certainly have made the mistake Mabel predicted.

"Yes," he hurried on to say; "I came to ask you for the hand of your niece."

"Mabel! Why I thought—but you'd better see her father."

"I have seen him, Miss Masters, and he referred me for an answer to you."

Miss Masters was very much flattered by this proof of her brother's confidence, and pleased at the consequence it gave her; but her first thought, like her brother's, was, of course, of her own convenience and comfort. If Mabel married, her chaperon's occupation would be gone.

"You are both very young," she said, in the hope of at least postponing the wedding. This was too bad. She also, like her brother, seemed to expect that George's

Vegetable love should grow
Faster than empires, and more slow;
While she should, if she please, refuse
Till the conversion of the Jews.

"Mabel is twenty, and I twenty-five. Besides," George adroitly added, "she would always have you to advise her, Miss Masters."

Miss Masters, thinking with her brother that the marriage would come off with or without her consent, decided that it would be wisest to make to herself new friends and a new home. But she must first make the most of her new importance.

"You've taken me so much by surprise, Mr. Kneeshaw, that I hardly know what to say. You must give me a little time to think the matter over, and talk it over with my brother, before I can give you an answer. A woman's happiness is a very serious thing," she added sententiously and solemnly, as if matrimony and misery went together invariably.

"You don't think I shall make her happy?" asked George, rather taken aback by this dismal way of looking at the thing.

"I think she will be as happy with you as with any one, Mr. Kneeshaw—quite; but a woman is much happier unmarried," nodding very decidedly.

"But you should consider our sex," urged George, much relieved; "a man is so much happier married. Isn't it a little selfish of you to look only at your own side of the question?"

"Perhaps I *was* a little selfish," confessed Miss Masters musingly, as if recalling all the hearts she had broken.

"You've done mischief enough already, Miss Masters. You owe our sex some reparation. Make it to me by giving me Mabel." It was an audacious venture, but perfectly successful.

"Well, we shall see," she said, with a smile that made George happy.

CHAPTER XV.

MR. ROBERT SAGAR.

MABEL felt very nervous as she entered her father's study next morning to read for him, and was not put more at her ease by his paying her the unusual attention of looking at her when she greeted him. Probably the last time he had looked at her with the least attention was when in her childhood he wished to verify in her weeping face the expressions of suffering illustrated by photographs of crying babies in Darwin's *Expression of the Emotions in Man and Animals*. Certainly she had grown since then, and grown into a truly lovely and graceful woman; but her father's only thought as he looked at her was, "How old I am getting!" Mabel was to him simply a figure on the dial of life which indicated how far the lengthening shadow had crept insensibly. He was quite angry with her for indicating it so unmistakably, and showed his ill-humour so sharply that Mabel was wretched all through the reading. She of course interpreted his ill-temper to mean disapproval of her engagement. Would he take the matter back into his own hands and break it off? Her suspense during that hour and a half was terrible and intolerable; and when upon her rising to withdraw at its close her father arrested her retreat with a sharp "Don't go yet," she was glad to sit down again, as her heart seemed suddenly to stop for a moment.

"I shall be glad if you will give me an additional hour in the day while you are here," he growled, speaking as if she was on a short visit.

"Yes, Father," was all she trusted herself to say.

"Two hours at each sitting, if it's not too much to ask you."

"I wish I could be of more use to you, Father. If you will also let me come for another hour in the evening to write for you, I could——"

"You left off, I think, at the 'hypothetical imperative.'"

Mabel, thus ungraciously cut short, resumed her reading. "Accordingly the hypothetical imperative only says that the action is good for some purpose *possible* or *actual*. In the first case it is a Problematical, in the second an Assertorial, practical principle. The categorical imperative, which declares an action to be objectively necessary in itself, without reference to any purpose, *i.e.*, without any other end, is valid as an Apodictive principle," etc., etc.

At the close of another half-hour Mabel escaped with a fluttering heart, expecting at each step towards the door to be recalled for sentence. Her father, however, made no further allusion to her engagement. He resented it bitterly, and would gladly have broken it off if his veto would have done it; but he knew so little of his daughter as to imagine that his interference would only precipitate the match. Mabel, on the other hand, knew her father so little as to imagine that consideration for her had something to do with his standing neutral in a matter of which he evidently disapproved. His evident disapproval, however, was a deep trouble to her, and served the proverbial purpose of alloying her otherwise perfect happiness.

"Nulla est sincera voluptas
Sollicitique aliquid lætis intervenit."

As for her aunt's most mournful condolences, which Mabel had next to encounter, they failed of their effect, as their subject was clergymen and matrimony in general, and not the special man and match on which Mabel's heart was set. The old lady always took her breakfast in bed. Only Mabel was allowed to take it to her, and not even Mabel was permitted to see her in dishabille. The breakfast was set out on a little table outside the bed-curtains, which were kept close drawn while Mabel was in the room. She persuaded not merely Mabel, but herself, that it was extreme modesty, not vanity, that would allow no eye to see her till she had given over an hour to her toilet. When Mabel had answered her aunt's breakfast bell this morning, and had entered bearing the tray, Miss Masters greeted her in a mumbling, muffled, and lamentable voice from within the veil. "Is that you, dear? How are you this morning?"

"Much better, thank you," answered Mabel, laughing. "I hope you had a good night, Aunt?"

"That wasn't to be expected, child. I had a very poor night."

This meant with Miss Masters a parenthesis of half an hour's wakefulness interrupting an otherwise sound sleep of nine hours.

"A very poor night. I was thinking of my old schoolfellow, Mary McAlister. She, too, married a clergyman. He was a widower with seven children. They used to sit in the gallery, and stick pins in the servant, I remember, and he would shake his head at them from the reading-desk. For he was only a curate, you know, and Mary *would* marry him. And then she was always writing letters to get them into one school or another. I had to give up answering them at last, poor

thing ; and it's only the other day I saw his death in the paper—'George Kilmore, aged 76, for 23 years vicar of Long Langstaffe.' She will be a clergyman's widow now. I have always remarked," she continued with increased dolefulness, "that clergymen have more widows than other professions. Wherever I go I am asked to support a society for the relief of the widows of the clergy of that diocese. I don't know how it is, I'm sure."

"Perhaps it's because they have more wives, Aunt. You know Mr. Kilmore was married twice."

"Perhaps so, dear," said her aunt placidly, completely taken in by this confusion of the Mormon with the Whistonian heresy. "But there she is, poor thing, a clergyman's widow, now !"

"But *she* may have died first," suggested Mabel hopefully.

"My dear, she was only five years older than me."

"Then she's likely to marry again, Aunt, and may not be a clergyman's widow after all."

"If they married again, child, how could there be so many of them?" asked her aunt triumphantly. "I'm sure I never take up a paper but I read, 'The widow of a clergyman is willing to take in two or three children to be educated with her own,' or, 'The widow of a clergyman would be deeply thankful for twelve postage stamps to get her orphan child into a Clergy Sons' School.' It's but a poor prospect, Mabel, my dear, and I must say I think you would have done better to have refused Mr. Kneeshaw."

"He didn't ask me to be his widow, Aunt."

"Well, my dear, young people always know best," said the old lady, somewhat huffed. "I only hope you'll not regret it. If I had accepted the first person that asked me I might have been a clergyman's widow myself to-day."

The gentleman here described by poetic licence as "the first person that asked me" was not a clergyman, but an usher in a school, who hoped one day to be ordained, and had not proposed for Miss Masters, but had shown her what she considered marked attentions, which she thought must have culminated in a proposal if she had not erred on the side of coyness.

"Did you love him, Aunt?" asked Mabel, now serious and interested.

"I never permitted myself to love any man. I had too much self-respect," replied the old lady with much dignity. "I can truly say that I have never given any man the slightest encouragement, and I never shall—never."

In the ardour of her heroic resolution, Miss Masters, forgetting that her hair, teeth, and complexion were on the toilet table, pushed the curtain aside, and presented to Mabel "a sight to dream of, not to tell." Mabel, notwithstanding her keen sense of the ridiculous, felt only shocked and sad at the pitiable spectacle, and turned hastily away to busy herself with the breakfast things. The sight, indeed, had the unexpected effect

of making her regret her flippant answers, and resolve to be more gentle and considerate with her aunt in the future.

"Here I am chattering away and your breakfast getting cold," she said, with her back turned to her aunt, who, being extremely short-sighted, flattered herself, as she shot back under shelter, that Mabel had not seen her.

"Bring the table a little nearer, my dear. Thank you, that will do. It's I that have been chattering; but it's all for your good, child."

Mabel, on leaving her aunt's room, went straight to her own—and to her glass, for *he* would be here in forty minutes more. Was love making her vain? She looked long in the glass with an expression that was at first pleased, then critical, then dissatisfied. She was not half as pretty as she longed to be, as she ought to have been for *him*. She smoothed her hair, tried one ribbon after another, till at last, in an outburst of disgust with herself and her silliness, she bundled them one and all away, shut the drawer, and ran down to the drawing-room. Here she walked restlessly about the room, sat down and read a few lines, got up, opened the piano, played a few bars, then turned round upon the piano-stool to look again at the timepiece on the mantelshef and to compare it with her watch. *He* would be here in twenty minutes now. *He is here!* for a loud ring of the bell brought the colour in a flood to her face. In another minute the demure Jane entered bearing a card. Mabel looked at the card, and for a moment her disappointment so filled her mind that the name thereon was unrecognised. Next moment it brought with it a rush of sad and sweet associations. It was her mother's dear old friend who used to write to her from India month after month long letters about her husband (who never wrote himself) and other Indian interests; who came to see them long ago when they were at Scarborough, and brought sumptuous presents, and made the week he stayed the happiest in all Mabel's remembrance. It was, indeed, no other than our chivalrous and facetious old friend, Bob Sagar, to whose considerate intervention Mabel owed her being sent home in her infancy with her mother to be brought up in England. He was himself now home for good, and had not been many months in England before he bethought him to look up the daughter of his old friend. He had reached Wefton the night before, had stayed at the "Queen's," and had come on to call next morning at this Indian and unearthly hour. And now, following close upon his card, he filled the doorway, "a good portly man, i' faith, and a corpulent, of a cheerful look, a pleasing eye, and most noble carriage." He was advancing into the room with his usual free foot, when the sight of Mabel coming to meet him stopped him dead short.

"It's—it's not Miss Masters?"

"No, it's Mabel," said that young lady, blushing and laughing at the expression of amazed admiration in Mr. Sagar's face. "Have you forgotten Queen Mab?" (the name he christened her in those old Scarborough days, when she exercised a sweet and absolute tyranny over him).

Mr. Sagar took the little hand offered him, held it in his hesitatingly for a moment, and then bent and kissed it with a real homage, which he laughed off as a burlesque tribute to Her Majesty.

"The queen has become an empress," he said, expressing in looks the surprise at her developed beauty, which his words only suggested, "and as an old Indian I've come to court to kiss hands."

This speech was most creditable to his presence of mind, in which, to do him justice, Mr. Sagar was seldom deficient, as he was not in the least prepared for such a development. It seemed but yesterday that this lovely and stately girl had sat on his knee with her head pressed against his shoulder, and both arms clasped about his neck, while he told her terrible stories (not strictly true) of his adventures with tigers and Thugs.

"I am so glad to see you," said Mabel simply, too much moved and pleased to keep up this badinage. "I thought I should never see you again."

Mr. Sagar, who looked little like a saint, was nevertheless canonised in Mabel's mind as her dead mother's ideal of goodness and kindness. Long before Mabel had seen him she had heard so much of him as to have formed an extraordinary, and even extravagant, childish idea of his goodness; and he still remembered the look of awe with which the little girl regarded him at their first interview. He soon, indeed, squandered this reverence by showing himself, in their games, much more of a child than his old-fashioned playmate; but he won, in its stead, an enduring affection. He had, however, so little idea of the impression he had made upon the solitary child that he doubted her having the slightest recollection of him, and was touched and surprised by the warmth of his welcome.

"I never thought you would have cared to see me again. I began letters to you three or four times, but always tore them up, thinking you had forgotten me."

"I think I know your letters by heart, Mr. Sagar."

"My letters?"

"Mother, when she was dying, gave them to me with two or three other things she thought much of. She said I might like to read them when I grew older." Here Mabel stopped, as her voice was growing unsteady; but Mr. Sagar did not speak. He was looking away from Mabel, out through the window, with a far-off expression in his dimmed grey eyes. "There was a half-finished letter to you, dated the day before," Mabel continued, after a pause; "but—but—it was all about me, and I didn't like to part with it. I'm sure you'll forgive me, Mr. Sagar."

Mr. Sagar was still silent, resolutely mastering an emotion of which he need not have been ashamed. At last he said rather huskily, turning to Mabel, "She bequeathed you to me in it?"

"She asked you to be to me what you were to her. I have the letter

here," she said, taking out a morocco case, in which she carried always about with her this last letter and two or three other relics of her mother. "It's yours, Mr. Sagar; but I hope you will let me keep it."

He didn't answer at once, but took, with a hand that trembled a little, the folded sheet of foreign paper, opened it reverently, and read the faded, blotted, tremulous, and uncertain writing:—

"DEAR FRIEND,—When I wrote last I was in great trouble. My little Mabel was very ill in scarlatina; but it has pleased God to give her back to my prayers. Still I have only sad news. I am very ill myself—I think, dying; indeed, the doctor just now almost said as much. What shall I do? What is to become of my little girl? I ought to thank you with my last breath for all you have been to me; but I cannot think of anything but my child. I cannot think of God as I ought. Oh, it is cruel! I don't know what I say! Dear, true friend, you will be to her what you have been to me—what you have been to me. She is not like other children; she will *die* without love. You will let her love you. You will write to her every month, and come to see her when you are in England. She loves you next to me in the world. She has no one else to love, and oh, she will die without some one to love! Her father is so taken up— My darling, you mustn't cry, and you must be very still and patient. Your father will come to love you in time, and there is always God, always God"—

Here the letter broke off, the writer, wandering through weakness, addressing her child in the last sentence. The nurse put away the half-finished letter into the desk, and here Mabel found it a month after her mother was buried. It was holy to her as her mother's last words; for, though she lived over another day, she never recovered consciousness. Mabel, child as she was, felt that she ought to have forwarded the letter to Mr. Sagar; and, indeed, did enclose it in a note to him, but took it out again at the last moment, and re-wrote her note, saying in it that her mother had left a half-finished letter to him, of which she enclosed a copy.

Mr. Sagar had turned away to the window, with his back to Mabel, to read the letter, and still stood turned away from her for a minute after he had read it, and even when he at last broke silence.

"It was my letter," he said, in a voice that shook a little. "You should have sent it to me. I should have let you had it back."

"I wrote to tell you about it, enclosing a copy of it; but father threw the letter in the fire. He said you had forgotten my existence."

Mr. Sagar, listening still to the dead voice, hardly seemed to hear Mabel's apology. He slowly re-read the letter, blurred now with the tears of a third sorrow; then folded it reverently, as a man covers with the facecloth the features of his dead, and handed it back to Mabel.

"She did leave you to me, Mabel, and you robbed me of the legacy," he said with a sad smile. "It might have been so different. I should

have had some one to care for, and to care for me, perhaps, all these years. You can do without me now."

"I have never done without you, Mr. Sagar. Next to my mother you have been most in my mind. I remember distinctly every day of that week in Scarborough, and every game we played, and every story you told; and I think I could say by heart all your letters to my mother."

Mr. Sagar could not help thinking how lonely and like his own must have been the life of which these thin shadows were the dearest companions. "It might have been so different," he said again, answering rather his thoughts than her words. "But it's too late now. Somebody will come soon who will be everything to you—— Come already," he muttered, as the door opened and George entered, and Mabel, all blushes and brightness, advanced to meet him. There could be no mistake about it; and Mr. Sagar felt unreasonably bitter when he rose to go within a decent interval after his introduction to Mr. Kneeshaw.

"Are you going, Mr. Sagar?"

"Yes; I have to catch the 11.30 for town."

"Not away altogether?" exclaimed Mabel in a tone of unmistakable distress.

"I only came to satisfy myself that you were well and happy, and I am quite satisfied."

"I shall not be happy if—— But you are not *really* going?" with such a pained expression in her voice, and in her face, as Mr. Sagar was the last man in the world to withstand.

"Of course I shall stay if your majesty commands me," he said, smiling and bowing, thoroughly ashamed of his childish outburst of spleen. "I have not forgotten my old allegiance."

"But you didn't really mean to go?" persisted Mabel, naturally quite perplexed by the seeming sudden change in her old friend.

"Oh, I should have come again after another ten years," he replied, somewhat embarrassed for an answer. "Rip van Winkle, you know. It is a lonely *rôle*, and just suits me."

The words were said in jest; but there was something in the tone that touched and troubled Mabel. "It doesn't suit your friends, though," she said sadly; "it is enough to have tried them so once."

"I don't deserve to have any," he said heartily and sincerely, more and more disgusted with himself. "I may come again to-morrow?"

"You must come again this evening, and see aunt and—and my father. I have so much still to say to you. No; I shall go down with you. Mr. Kneeshaw will excuse me for a moment."

As they went down the stairs together Mr. Sagar thought he might venture to ascertain the truth of the suspicion which made him so morose for the moment. "It *was* a *levee*, then, this morning, Queen Mab? He came to court, eh?" pointing upwards to the room in which they had left George. There was not only no possibility of mistaking, but no

possibility of pretending to mistake Mr. Sagar's expressive pantomime and pun. Facetious flippancy was Mr. Sagar's chief social fault and *forte*; but Mabel was little likely to resent it from him, even when applied to so sacred a subject.

"We are engaged, Mr. Sagar," blushing exceedingly.

"Long?"

"Since yesterday."

There was an awkward silence of a moment as they stood together at the bottom of the stairs, during which Mr. Sagar looked wistfully into Mabel's scarlet face, while she was desperately intent upon smoothing with her foot a rebellious lock upon the mat.

"Well, God bless you, dear! I hope he deserves you," he said at last, as he stooped, kissed her on the forehead, and departed.

Mr. Sagar, as he walked away to his hotel, took himself severely to task for his senseless petulance. What would he have had? When he left the "Queen's" in the morning he really did mean to return to town by the 11.30; for he thought Mabel would have wholly forgotten him. So far from forgetting him, she had made his mere memory a friend during all those long and lonely years in which he had completely neglected her. And now, when light had come into her life from another quarter, he was—jealous!

The word brought with it ideas and dreams at which Mr. Sagar, albeit not given to blushing, blushed. She was engaged only yesterday. Suppose he had come, as he was within an ace of coming, two months earlier: would he have had a chance? Pshaw! the loveliest girl he had ever seen throw herself away on a man twenty-two years her senior, who might be her father!

Mr. Sagar might well blush—a middle-aged bachelor smitten at first sight of a girl in her teens! But, apart from Mabel's beauty, there is to be said in excuse, first, that Mr. Sagar grew to middle-age in India, where girls, if they do not marry immediately, do not improve in manner, mind, or person; and, secondly, that Mabel again and again recalled her mother to him, and her mother was his ideal of all that was most winning and worshipful in woman.

"You will be to her what you have been to me," he muttered, quoting from her last letter. "Always the 'Peri at the gate.' It's but a poor part; and poorly I've played it, too," with a sudden relapse into remorse. As he walked up the steps of the "Queen's" he felt terribly "out of it all," and realised ruefully the truth of the hackneyed comparison of the world to an inn:—

The world's an inn, and there, unknown,
I solitary sit me down;
Many I hear, and some I see—
I, nought to them; they, nought to me.



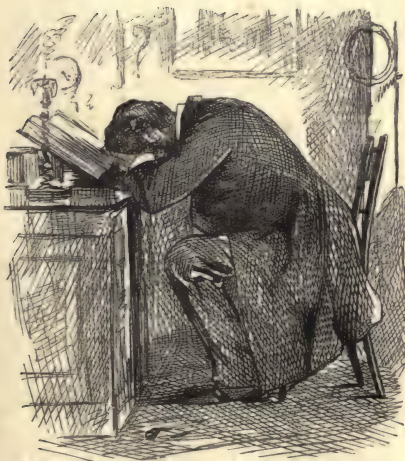
"SEE! I HAVE BROUGHT GANTUMS FOR A HOMP."

THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JUNE, 1881.

Love the Debt.

CHAPTER XVI.
MISS TUBBS' PETS.



F the five trustees of St. George's, Mr. James Mills had the most interest and the least voice in the appointment of its first vicar. He alone of the five lived within the new parish and would attend the church; but this expresses only a small part of his stake in the appointment. Not only his Sunday but his weekday comfort depended upon the choice of his co-trustees—of his co-trustees we say ad-

visedly, for Mr. Mills did not venture even to pretend to have a will of his own in the matter. And it was this very lack of a will of his own that was at the root of the discomfort in store for him in the event of the first vicar being other than he should be. For Mr. James Mills was henpecked—not by his wife, for he was a widower, but by his sister-

in-law, Miss Tubbs. It was now over ten years since Miss Tubbs came on a visit of three weeks to her sister, Mrs. Mills; "and when goes hence?" Well, life is uncertain; Mr. Mills may survive her.

Miss Tubbs, even before her sister's death, bore such "solely sovereign sway and masterdom" in Mr. Mills' house as that her two pugs and her black and-tan terrier were much better attended to than her little nephews and nieces. So also were their successors, a monkey and a macaw—a perfect devil of a bird which, in its gentler moods, imitated a steam-whistle so admirably as sometimes to mislead the Midland signalman a quarter of a mile off. A month after her sister's death, however, these two pets were packed off, like their predecessors, at a moment's notice, and her nephews and nieces reigned in their stead. She petted them in the same maudlin and immoderate way in which she had petted their predecessors, so that they soon came to fill the vacant places respectably, becoming nearly as mischievous as the monkey and nearly as noisy as the macaw. Still Miss Tubbs seemed sometimes to miss her pet pugs also, for she had now much at her table the Rev. Samuel Sherlock, vicar of St. Silas', and the Rev. Hickson Gant, senior curate of the parish church. These two gentlemen were recommended to her by something more than their intrinsic merits—by spiritual kinship, in fact, as being children of the same mother, the Catholic Church. For Miss Tubbs, on her return from one of her annual visits to London, brought home a gorgeous and complete set of vestments, &c., with her. She had been to an auction with the intention of buying old china, and had bid for as a bargain, and had knocked down to her, some altar-cloths—the work of the deceased spinster whose goods were being sold, put up by the order of her sacrilegious nephew and heir. When Miss Tubbs bid for them she was under the impression that they were designed for secular use, but when she paid for them their sacred purpose was explained to her by the auctioneer. She was naturally a good deal disgusted at first; but, to make the best of a bad bargain, she bought from a sisterhood the complementary vestments and came back to Wefton an advanced ritualist. The next thing to be done was to build a church for her vestments, and it is not at all improbable that she would have bullied the meek Mr. Mills into this extravagance if it had not happened that Messrs. Gledhill and Matchlock about this time set the project on foot of building and endowing St. George's. Miss Tubbs took it up with extraordinary enthusiasm, got up a bazaar which brought in nearly two thousand pounds, forced Mr. Mills to become a liberal subscriber, and so at last he got thrust upon him the greatness of the trusteeship. Much credit was due to her, but she claimed all. She spoke always of the new church as *hers*, as if she was the undisputed founder and patron; for she had not the least doubt that the trustees would accept the nominee of *her* nominee, Mr. Mills—that is, of course, her choice as communicated to them through her brother-in-law.

Having, then, provided vestments and a church, the next thing was the choice of a priest. It fell on Mr. Hickson Gant. She could not

have done better, for Mr. Gant's ritualism was as soundly based as her own. He loved it for the importance it gave him ; for Mr. Gant's importance, like everything else he called his, was borrowed. He was the merest echo and shadow of a man. The political opinion he heard from one friend he would retail as his own to the next he met, and would sometimes even produce to you to-day, as his own manufacture, the brilliant paradox you had yourself suggested to him yesterday. Sitting opposite to him at Miss Tubbs' table we have even heard him entertain his fair friend on his left with the remarks he had just overheard from the gentleman who sat next but one to him on his right. Like every one who lives on borrowed means, too, he was wild and reckless in the expenditure of his loans. He would rattle off volubly sometimes the most idiotic and sometimes the most tremendous opinions without having the faintest idea of their character, and that with such boldness as to impose upon other people besides young ladies ; for he differed from a natural echo in this, that he was always much louder than the original voice, resembling, in fact, rather the reproduction of the voice in the whispering gallery of St. Paul's. This was not the least of his recommendations to Miss Tubbs, who was given to impatience of any other voice than her own or its echo. His fondness for children was another of his recommendations to her. Mr. Gant detested children, but among his affectations—he was a mere bundle of affectations—he professed an infatuated fondness for children, and Miss Tubbs took him at his word. Her nephews and nieces, as we have said, took the place of her dogs in the house. She so petted them herself and insisted on others so petting them that they became the most maddening little ruffians imaginable. Never, not even in an examination hall, did Mr. Gant undergo more misery than in the nursery of "The Elms," till at last he could stand it no longer. One day, after lunch, when the vestments, &c., had been examined and admired for the hundredth time, and Mr. Gant was trying to think of some excuse to escape which was not transparent and had not been used before, Miss Tubbs said archly, "Now for your romp, Vicar"—in private she always called him "Vicar" by prolepsis—"your mind has been in the nursery for the last ten minutes"—it had indeed ; "come along, I like to see you in their midst."

That was the worst of it ; so she did. If she had only cast him into the arena, left him there, and departed, he might have made a little defence or a speedy escape ; but she sat like Nero, with thumbs turned down, while he was tortured and torn to pieces.

"I couldn't think of going without seeing the little ones," gasped Mr. Gant, with a sickly smile.

The little ones were four in number : Mark, aged twelve ; Margaret Maria, better known as "Maggot," aged nine ; Wagstaff Tubbs, or "Tubby," aged six ; and Dicky, or "Weenums," aged five.

"That's Maggot!" cried Miss Tubbs, quickening her steps as hideous howls of rage tormented the air. "Poor child, she's in some trouble !"

It seems that while Emily, the wretched nursemaid, was seated quite

worn out in an arm-chair, Mark, a lad of most precocious and diabolical ingenuity, who will one day invent a gallows, if he's spared, took off her cap, let down her hair, and, under pretence of plaiting it caressingly, tied it firmly to the chair-back. He then sent Maggot to fling the cap into the fire suddenly in front of Emily, who, starting up instinctively, was nearly scalped. It was a capital joke until Emily, having at last unknotted her hair, boxed Maggot's ears. Hence the howls.

"Hush! Maggot! What's the matter?" asked Miss Tubbs on entering.

"She's b—b—boxed my ears!" sobbed Maggot, pointing to Emily, with such fire in her eyes as might have scorched up the few tears of fury she had shed.

"Please, ma'am——"

"Oh, Auntie," interrupted Mark, "such a lark! I tied Meely's hair to the chair-back and Maggot shied her cap into the fire, and Meely jumps up like jack-in-the-box and nearly chucks her head off. Didn't you, Meely? Nasty, ill-tempered thing! You'd like to box my ears, wouldn't you? Bah!" with a horrible grimace, his tongue out, and his thumb to his nose.

Miss Tubbs interchanged glances of admiration of Mark's cleverness with Mr. Gant, whose perverted sympathies were, however, really and profoundly with his wretched fellow-martyr, Meely.

"Emily, you had better find another place," said Miss Tubbs, with stern calmness—"not as a nurse. You are no more fit to be a nurse than that baby," pointing to Weenums. "Lolling in an arm-chair with your hair down and your cap off! The poor child might have been burned before you could have got free to save her. Come here, Maggot; uum—did they?—poor little popsums!" patting Maggot's head precisely as she would pat a pug's. "See; I have brought Gantums for a romp."

At this there were such howls of savage joy as when a rat, fished out of a bag, is held up by the neck before being dropped among the dogs. "Hurrah! Let's play at horses!" shouted Mark. "Horses!" screamed Maggot, Tubby, and Weenums with wonderful unanimity. "Horses," or, as it should, perhaps, more properly be entitled, "Horse," since there was but one animal of the kind in the piece, was a most popular drama in two acts, in which Mr. Gant sustained the principal part. The first act presented the grooming of the horse, the second the driving. The grooming consisted in scrubbing Mr. Gant's head and face with a nail-brush, representing a currycomb, wielded by Mark with much energy and many hisses, while Mr. Gant, of course, was on his hands and knees. The currycomb was not applied to the horse's back and sides, in part because they were not sensitive, and in part because the animal was bestridden by Maggot, Tubby, and Weenums together; who, being excluded by Mark from all share in the grooming, consoled themselves by jumping up and down on the beast's back. The horse, having been thoroughly groomed down, was dragged by the forelock (fiery red) to a rocking-chair to be harnessed. During his progress from the stable to the coachhouse Tubby

and Weenums kept their seats on his back, but Maggot got off to walk by his side and stamp with her foot on his hand whenever it touched the floor. It was a sight to make an old man young to see the joy of that child each time she scrunched it. Her laugh was like sunshine set to music. Mr. Gant, however, not having "the child's heart within the man's," though not quite unmoved, was unmoved to laughter. The horse having been most elaborately harnessed (for Mark was particular to pedantry in imitating every detail he could remember—be sure he remembered the bit), the second act opened with the driving of the carriage. Tubby and Weenums, observing the unities, stuck still to the beast's back as postillions whose duty it was not to spare the spur. Nor did they. Mark and Maggot drove, Mark having the command of the reins and Maggot of the whip. Maggot, however, using the whip with such zest and zeal as not to spare even the postillions—whose howls were sweet to Mr. Gant—was promptly disarmed by Miss Tubbs and retired in a sulk to the window. Finding no one but herself a pin the worse for this move she became more and more splenetic, till suddenly, and as one possessed, she darted back to the scene, caught the unhappy horse by the forelock of fire, and gave it so vicious a tug, that Mr. Gant, considering no living in England worth this, suddenly started up. The carriage, being a rocking-chair, was knocked backwards upon Mark; Tubby and Weenums, "like tumbled fruit in grass," rolled over and over on the floor, and Maggot, as amazed as Balaam, ran to her aunt. Mark, who withal was a manly little ruffian, thought the thing a joke, was up in a moment, and, being reminded of the breakdown of a cab he had witnessed in Wefton, shouted at the top of his voice, "Sit on his head! Sit on his head!" So screaming, he sprang like a tiger upon Mr. Gant from behind, clasped him round the throat, and tried to pull him down; in a second Maggot reinforced him, and between them Mr. Gant, taken by surprise, was borne backwards to the ground. Here Mark sat on his face in a most business-like manner and gave cool and clear orders to his helps. "Cut the traces! Keep clear of his hind legs there! Woa! would you?" This last admonition was addressed to Mr. Gant, who was as restive as he was able to be under the weight of four very fine children sitting on his face and chest. Having succeeded at last in oozing from under them, he gave Mark such a sounding box in the ear as convinced even this vivacious youth that the game was over. Mark, red as fire, looked up amazed for a moment and then flew at Mr. Gant and gave him a furious kick on the shin.

"Mark, come here!" cried Miss Tubbs, in a cold, clear-cut, commanding tone. She felt shocked at Mr. Gant's childish loss of temper, but she must conceal this feeling from the children lest they should lose respect for their priest—"Gantums," to wit. She must even affect to think the poor children in fault.

"Mark, did you hear me speak?" Perhaps Mark couldn't hear his aunt speak because of the noise of his own whistling. For he so

accompanied with a few careless notes his defiant little swagger to the nursery door. Having reached and opened it without obstruction, he shouted, "Come along, Maggot!" when not only he and Maggot, but Tubby and Weenums, shot out of sight like a shoal of minnows.

"Mark! Come back this instant!" The only reply was "Ganderum Gantums! Ganderum Gantums! Ganderum Gantums!" repeated hundreds of times with maddening persistence, first by a single shrill voice, and then by a still shriller chorus. Miss Tubbs strode out of the nursery and along the corridor to the stair-head, the voices ceasing suddenly when she was halfway, and being succeeded by the sound of a scramble and scamper downstairs. She then returned to the nursery, where Mr. Gant, having recovered his temper and lost his courage, was awaiting her in some trepidation. "It needs some forbearance to play with children, Mr. Gant." (N.B.—Not "Vicar," but "Mr. Gant"—a change of title as significant as Cæsar's "Quirites.") She could not forgive his ferocity in a moment. "Mark, you know, is only a child."

"Only a child." To Mr. Gant it sounded as though she said "Only a mad dog." Was there a more devilish being in existence than a child?

"He is high-spirited and hasty, but very forgiving," continued Miss Tubbs, "and I have no doubt that when next you come he will have forgotten it and be the same as ever with you. I want you to get on well with him, for I mean him to be one of your choir, Vicar." (Cæsar had returned to "Milites.") "One of his choir!" Merciful Heaven! that little demon to haunt him Sunday and weekday at rehearsal and service!

At this moment the future chorister, conducting his own little choir, was heard serenading them under the window: "Ganderum Gantums! Ganderum Gantums! Ganderum Gantums! Ganderum Gantums!" *ad infinitum*; until Miss Tubbs herself seemed to think it a little monotonous.

"Tiresome child! The best way is not to notice him. I always find that he comes right if he's let alone. And if I were you, Vicar, I shouldn't say a word to him about being sorry, or that, when next you come, as ten to one he will have forgotten the blow by then. Dear, dear! that sing-song is very trying. Let us go into the library, and we shan't hear it, and they'll never find us out."

"Thank you, I must go, Miss Tubbs. Would you kindly allow me to set myself to rights a little in Mr. Mills' dressing-room?"

Mr. Gant looked as if he had been in a street fight. His fiery red hair, which he kept accurately parted in the middle, and smooth as glass at the sides, was shooting out tongues of flame, as in a pentecostal picture. His cassock waistcoat, having lost some of its mysterious fastenings, had slipped away from the dog-collar, and exposed an expanse of dingy-looking flannel shirt, while his coat was torn at the collar and dusty down the back.

"Certainly, Vicar. Why, you've torn your coat! If you will take it off I shall get Binns to put a stitch in it."

"Oh, no, thank you. I am going straight home."

While Mr. Gant was refitting in the dressing-room he racked his brain to think of some excuse for asking Miss Tubbs to accompany him down the drive to the gate. He felt certain he would otherwise be waylaid and mobbed by those—— Here he clenched teeth and hands. He could have prayed for those children.

"You might come as far as St. George's with me, Miss Tubbs."

"St. George's! Why, we went over it together only last Monday. Has anything occurred since?"

"Well, no; but I thought, perhaps—there were the Prayer-Book markers, you know."

"I told the man plainly as words could speak that he must make the clergy stalls higher to hold such Prayer Books as would fit my markers. He *can't* have misunderstood me. Perhaps you *had* better go to-day, Vicar, and mention it again. These men are so stupid."

So there was nothing for it but that the wretched man must go sounding on his perilous way alone. Mark, Maggot, & Co., however, had by this time forgotten his existence. While they were singing their plain-song of "Ganderum Gantums!" with undiminished energy, old Shorrocks the gardener, of whom Miss Tubbs herself almost stood in awe, took Mark smartly in the rear with the flat of his spade for trampling upon the bed that was under the nursery window; "and one," as Tennyson sings, of the whilom joyous linnet—

And one is sad; his note is changed.

But not for long. Mark rallies his forces at the far side of a manure heap near the back gate of the garden, and suggests a raid upon the pot-house to carry off two flower-pots each for cockshots. In the pot-house, however, his attention is diverted by two pots of paint, red and white, for the woodwork of the frames, when it occurs to the ever ingenious Mark that it would be a sweeter revenge to paint old Shorrocks' white camellias red and the red white. For Shorrocks carried off prizes for his camellias. Accordingly Maggot is entrusted with the white paint for the red camellias, while Mark set to work with the red paint upon the white. This having been done pretty perfectly, and much paint remaining over which it seemed a shame to waste, Mark suggested their disguising themselves as Red Indians, to frighten crabby old Meely. Red paint and feathers only were required. A cock, after a smart chase, was run into the hen-house, and had his tail plucked out by Mark while Maggot was painting Tubby and Weenums. Weenums didn't like it at first, it was too like washing. But a sight of Tubby's face when finished convinced him that the resemblance was only superficial, and he submitted with an excellent grace. Then Maggot painted Mark, and Mark Maggot, and flower-pots of suitable sizes for helmets having been picked out and adorned with feathers stuck in the bottom, were fitted on each of their heads by Mark, and the tribe set forth in Indian file upon

the war-path. Outside the garden gate they came all but face to face upon Shorrocks wheeling a barrow. Mark and Maggot, moulting their feathered helmets, fled, leaving their rearguard in the enemy's hands. Mark, when near the house, tripped and came down, and looked back as he rose to see if the enemy was hard upon him ; but, finding him far off with Tubby and Weenums in either hand, making slowly for the house, he shot away in the opposite direction. Maggot sped past her fallen brother without once looking back, and dashed headlong into the house, into the hall, and almost into the arms of her aunt. "Gracious Heavens !" exclaimed Miss Tubbs, so horrified to see her darling in a panic, and covered, as it seemed, with blood, that she had hardly strength to half carry and half drag the child to the nearest sofa, which happened to be in the drawing-room. Maggot in this way was enabled to print an Indian proof impression of her face and frock upon her aunt's sumptuous silk dress, and a fainter but still fair copy upon the sofa.

This, in brief, explains Mr. Gant's escape. When he got down the drive, and out on the road, and breathed freely, he resolved never again, while he lived, to affect a love of children. If then and there he had abjured all his other affectations of liking things he had no taste for, and reading books he had never opened, and understanding subjects which were Greek to him, there would, it is true, have been but little of him left, but the balance would not have been unendurable.

CHAPTER XVII.

GEORGE'S CONFESSION.

WE have discreetly left our lovers to themselves for the last chapter. It would have been in the worst taste to have intruded upon them, and, besides, would have been a blunder no less than a crime. Love, like lotos-eating, is delicious, but stupefying, and lovers' talk to outsiders is

Like a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong.

Nor should we now return to George and Mabel if their happiness were cloudless ; for cloudless happiness, like a cloudless sky, is not picturesque. But it was not cloudless. Far from it. Mabel, quick to read the slightest shade of expression even in a little child's face, saw that all was not right with George before they had been a week engaged. The cloud which crossed his face at times threw its shadow upon hers, and made her miserable for the moment and tormented her afterwards. He was not perfectly happy in their engagement. That was plain. But why ? Mabel could think of only one reason—that he had mistaken fancy for affection, and had found out his mistake. And yet—and yet, who ever loved if he did not ? She recalled again and again every word

and look and tone and gesture by which he seemed "to catch up the whole of love and utter it" more and more passionately and impetuously at every fresh meeting. Still, in the very midst of such a transport, this dark mood seemed to seize him, involuntary as a shudder, and carry him away for the moment, and estrange his very thoughts from her. Whence was it? Surely, if it had nothing to do with her, he would have confided it to her. He seemed to open out all his whole heart to her, except this Bluebeard chamber. Her fate must be hid away in it—her life itself. Mabel was no silly lovesick sentimentalist, but she felt she had staked all on George's love. If she lost, she mightn't die; but it would be better for her if she did die. The mere shadow of such a cloud and eclipse "had power to shake her as it passed." Night after night she paced up and down her room, recalling and repeating his most passionate words, as a charm against the memory of his moody and miserable looks. But the charm would fail, and these looks would haunt and terrify her, working upon her exceeding self-distrust and lowliness. For what was there in her to hold such a heart as George's? You see, her father's supreme contempt for her, making its mark upon her character in her most impressionable years, was not easily erasable. In moments of depression she thought of herself as her father thought of her; and those moments, when George's moody looks recurred to her, were moments of miserable depression.

At the same hour and in the same mood George also would be pacing up and down his narrow room. What can we say for him? We can say nothing for him. That he was a weak man—pitifully weak, perhaps—our readers will long since have decided. Well, he was weak. He is not an ideal hero by any means. He was not stronger than nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand, but he was at least as strong. It is not easy, out of a novel, to be brave against the world, especially if the world includes a girl like Mabel; and though George up to this was a slave, if you like, as

All are slaves who dare not choose
Hatred, slander, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;

—yet he was a slave in very good company, and in a very large company, which may even include the reader who condemns him. But even the reader who condemns him would pity him if he saw his naked heart, as he paced up and down his room. His life a lie, and such a lie! A lie at the fount of truth, poisoning every word and every act and every relationship. The dress he wore a cheat—his position a sacrilege—his bread, holy bread, profaned and stolen. A false priest! God in heaven! no more loathsome creature crawls the earth. He must strangle this foul serpent before it coils another fold about him, binding his helpless hands to his sides. At least he must confide in Mabel, and not make her also his dupe. How he abhorred himself for the

wicked weakness which made him catch at this innocent life as he was being swept away, and drag it also into the vortex. It might be supposed that George could think of nothing but Mabel in the very first week of their engagement. Nor could he. It was the thought of Mabel made his cowardice and dishonesty more insupportable than ever. Her love, like an honour conferred by a prince, made the man who won it long to prove himself worthy of it. Worthy of it! Was he worthy of it? He was a living lie to her, as to all. Thus it was that George never felt the falsehood of his position more intensely than on the very morning after his engagement. It was no inconstancy that made his mind recur again that morning to the misery that tormented it the morning before, or it was an inconstancy like Lovelace's:—

Yet this inconstancy is such
As you too shall adore ;
I could not love thee, dear, so much,
Loved I not honour more.

It was love itself woke his conscience, which had been lulled to sleep for a few hours. It was true there were baser agencies at work to waken it. Mr. Gant, in his zeal for the Church, lost not a moment in rousing Wefton to a sense of the danger which threatened it by the appointment of such a man as Kneeshaw to such a living as St. George's. George heard from friend and foe the venomous reports he was at the pains to spread about him ; and, though he could conscientiously contradict many of them, there were some whose truth he had to admit, and he saw then in his friends' shocked faces, as in a glass, the reflection of his own re-awakened conscience. "A poor creature," you cry, "who has to look for his conscience into every face he meets!" No ; his conscience was no echo, but a voice which, louder or lower, said still the same thing. But he had listened also to other voices—the voices of two men who were older, wiser, better than himself—one, Archer Lawley's ; the other, that of a London light of the Broad Church party ; and both had said, "You thought differently two years since ; you will think differently two years hence. Wait." But who had advised him to fling himself, in the interval, into the way of such a girl as Mabel, to seek and gain her love, and blacken her life with the dark shadow of his own ? It was criminal and abominable selfishness. He palliated it to himself with no excuse. There were excuses for it, and Mabel herself the most overpowering of all ; but he admitted none. No one could condemn him more absolutely and pitilessly than he condemned himself, and no one would have imposed upon him a more terrible penalty than his own remorse. The reader will have seen that he was one of those men who, like children, abandon themselves in joy or sorrow to the mood of the moment ; and the agony of his hour of remorse was as utter as the rapture of the hour of his acceptance.

Thus it was that at times, as he looked into Mabel's face, he felt as

the Tempter might have felt, if he could have known remorse, as he looked into the peaceful loveliness of the Eden he was about to desolate. And Mabel would catch this expression clouding his face, and would treasure it, as we treasure bitter memories, and put her own modest and miserable construction upon it, and keep her own sad vigil, as George kept his, half the night through.

"What is it, George?"

She had been arranging some flowers in a vase on the mantelpiece, and had drawn herself back with her head on one side to admire the effect, and, finding that a camellia would not harmonise with its surroundings, had taken it out and turned suddenly to fix it in George's coat, when she met his miserable look.

"What is it, George?"

There was not much in the words, but a world of meaning faltered in her voice and looked through her yearning eyes. There was no misunderstanding or affecting to misunderstand her, and indeed George had made his mind up that morning to confess all, and abide by Mabel's decision. He had no fear of his confession affecting her fate.

Leave thou thy sister when she prays,
Her early heaven, her happy views;
Nor thou with shadow'd hint confuse
A life that leads melodious days,

was advice which did not seem to apply in Mabel's case. George had heard of the strange training through which her father had put her, and seen how she had grown up as a lily in a rank soil, drawing only sweetness and purity out of corruption itself.

He took both her hands in his, drew her towards him, kissed her with a fervour which was itself a reassurance of unwavering love, and, seating her by his side on the sofa, told her all.

Mabel was infinitely relieved. No doubt she ought to have been shocked, or even horrified; but such is the selfishness of human nature that her first feeling was a sense of relief that George was loyal to his love. Nor again was his disloyalty to his Church, when she turned to think of it, as terrible to her as it would have been to most of her sex. Having the strangest and strongest faith in her father, she had come to think religious doubt was the special temptation of very clever men, who were high above other temptations. Having no earthly battles to fight, they had to fight in the air. George, therefore, in right of his unworldliness and cleverness, was naturally exposed to this temptation, and by the same right would overcome it at last. It was only a question of time. For these reasons Mabel was not as shocked as she ought to have been by his confession—was rather relieved by it, as we have said, and looked her relief, and almost expressed it.

"I thought—I was afraid"—and then she paused, ashamed of her selfish relief and of her doubt of George.

"It's your turn to confess now," he said, turning her face upwards to his with his hand. He felt a great weight taken off him by his confession, and by her calm reception of it.

"What is it?"

Then, with her head leaning against his shoulder, she made the confession—incredible to him—that she imagined his moodiness meant repentance of his engagement. After he had exacted a hundred penalties for this treasonous suspicion of treason, and had come to himself again, he said, while an expression as of acute physical pain crossed his face, "But it is our engagement which maddens me, my darling. It was not enough to steal the very bread I eat, but I must steal also your hand and happiness."

"Steal?"

"Wasn't it to steal it, to gain it under false pretences?"

"Well, I am under no delusion about you now," she said, smiling, "and I give it to you all over again," putting her hand soothingly upon his.

"But your father wouldn't have given it; your aunt wouldn't have given it to a man of no profession and no prospects. For I *must* give the Church up, Mabel," looking anxiously into her face.

"Of course you must—for a time," she said in a clear, decided tone.

"For ever, darling."

"No; for a time. It will all come back," speaking with an unflinching assurance, as of a settled certainty.

"But even if it did, St. George's will never come back, nor any other promotion. I should be a marked man, and a curate all my days. I must give you up, Mabel. I must give you up with all the rest," rising, turning from her, and hiding his face on his folded arms, which rested on the mantelpiece. Mabel rose also, and, putting her hand upon his shoulder, said playfully, "I see how it is. I was right all along. You give up St. George's to escape your engagement. But it's no use. I shall hold you to it. I shall never give you up." George turned, clasped her in his arms, and strained her to his breast, murmuring incoherent words of endearment, between his kisses. Mabel, having with difficulty disengaged herself, thought it safer to change the subject.

"But why didn't you decline St. George's at first?" she asked, rather perplexed.

"I *had* written to decline it, but Lawley thought it a passing mood, and that I should come right in time; and I tried hard myself to think so, for to give it up was to give you up. It was the day of the picnic," said George expressively, as if the intoxication of that day might excuse anything.

"But," asked Mabel, completely bewildered, "did Mr. Lawley think it right that you should say in church and say to dying people what you didn't believe?"

"He thought I should come in time to believe it."

Mabel was silent. She had a feeling little short of reverence for Mr. Lawley, from all she had heard of his goodness, and she had the deepest distrust of her own judgment; but this seemed to her a matter of plain right and wrong, truth and falsehood, on which there could be no two opinions. George marked her significant silence.

"Lawley didn't know how deep it had gone; and, besides, it wasn't he persuaded me. It was my own selfishness and weakness and cowardice, Mabel."

"But you're going to resign?"

"Yes; too late," said George bitterly. "Do you think this thing is but a week old, Mabel? It has been growing ever so long—long before I knew you; and yet I must pursue you, and win you, and bind you to me, and drag you down with the wreck. I have been a selfish brute all along," he groaned.

"I don't see how you could have helped loving me," said Mabel, thinking it better to treat lightly what he seemed to take most to heart; "and if I fell in love with you, it wasn't your fault. Besides, perhaps my love, after all, may not be the misfortune you think it." But, seeing no answering smile in his haggard face, she added, with a sudden change to solemnity, all her soul in her eyes, "George, your love came to me when I needed it most, and, perhaps"—speaking hesitatingly, with a timid diffidence—"my love may be some help to you in your great trouble."

The girl's ideal of life was to live for another, and in her heart was something like the suggestion of Mordecai to Esther, "Who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this?" She felt more happy than ever in her engagement, for she had a hope, a faith, an assurance that she could help George in a way of which we shall not speak here. George, as he looked into a face that was as the face of a guardian angel, felt more deeply stricken than ever with love and with remorse.

"Your love? What right have I to your love? I have robbed you of it. I have been an impostor even to you——"

"George, do you think I fell in love with your white tie?" with a suspicion of scorn in her voice. She resented this recurrence to such a sordid consideration as the loss of position and prospects.

"A white tie means a good deal, Mabel, put on or put off; and means more still if left on when it ought to have been torn off. It's the coward's white flag. And you did give your love to it, so far as you gave it to what it stood for at the very lowest—common truth and honesty."

"And now that I find you so false and dishonest as to give up everything for what you think the truth, I may take it back, may I? It is you, George, that have given your love under a mistake, if this was your idea of me."

"No, Mabel," he said sadly, "it is because I knew too well what

you were that I cannot forgive myself. I knew that in giving me your love, you were giving me your life, and yet I took it, with this ruin plain before me. It was dastardly selfishness, my darling, and you are the only one in the world who would not say so."

"It's as well, then, that I'm the only one in the world it concerns," as a thought of her father's indifference and her aunt's doleful ideal of a clergyman's wife crossed her mind. "Do you think I should have thanked you for being so heroic as to give me up? You can't forgive yourself for having proposed for me, but, perhaps, *I* shouldn't have forgiven you if you hadn't. Which would you rather have, sir?" she said, reverting again to cheerfulness as likely to be the most effectual exorcism of George's remorse—as indeed it proved. There ensued a "fond" comparison of dates as to the dawn of love in each of their hearts, in which Mabel, by most certainly, but unconsciously, antedating her attachment, convinced George that, if he had given her up when he first resolved to do so, *both* would have been heart-broken.

By the time they had come to this consoling conclusion Miss Masters was nearly due in the drawing-room, and they therefore adjourned to the "nursery" to write the necessary letters of resignation to Dr. Clancy and Mr. Pickles, and to decide upon their plans for the future.

In most girls there is something of the spirit burlesqued in Lydia Languish which is attracted towards romantic sacrifices. Man is as God made him; but woman is as man has made her, and centuries of our exacting selfishness have implanted in her self-effacement as an instinct. Mabel had, besides, the advantage of an excellent education of this kind from her father. George's resignation, therefore (its cause and his distress apart), was almost welcome to her. It not only drew them closer together, but gave her an opportunity of self-devotion. She felt quite happy in this thought as she leaned lovingly over him while he wrote his letters—curt to his rector, and courteous to his patron—and suggested the softening of a phrase or the lengthening of a sentence with a delightful sense of identity of interests. George, you may be sure, would have gladly spent the day re-writing his letters with her hand on his shoulder and her head almost touching his. When they were at last written and addressed, there remained the more important question of his future. What was he to do? It was a dismal outlook. Mabel suggested tuition, as it could be carried on with one foot, as it were, still in the Church, to which he might thence most easily return with the return of his faith. But George, not sharing her assurance as to the return of his faith, and having, besides, the deepest distaste and even disgust for pedagogy, convinced himself and her that heresy would be a bar to a decent appointment of this kind, even if he had any university distinction to recommend him for it, which he had not. There was the Bar, but that meant a slow death by starvation to a man of small pri-

vate means ; and there was the medical profession, but here, too, more money than he could command was essential. For any other calling they could think of he was disqualified either by age, or training, or poverty, or incompetence. There remained only emigration, to which Mabel was as strongly opposed as George was inclined. It was not merely that it would separate him from her, but it would separate him from the Church, she thought, more hopelessly than any of the other alternatives.

"Well, what else can I do, dearest?" he asked despondently. Certainly it was a hopeless outlook.

"I think I should ask Mr. Lawley's advice, George."

George had never seen Lawley since the day of the picnic. He was utterly ashamed—as well he might be—of his wicked vacillation. That morning of the picnic he had written to decline St. George's ; in the evening he had allowed Lawley to burn the letter ; now he had just re-written it. Between then and now he had done the very thing Lawley had denounced so justly and bitterly—caught Mabel with his drowning hands and dragged her down with him. Thus the mere mention of Lawley's name awoke the self-reproach Mabel had lulled to sleep.

"You're only a child," he groaned abruptly. "You don't know what you're doing, or what's before you. But I know, and yet—I can never forgive myself."

Here was her work to do all over again.

"George, promise me never again to speak of our engagement in this way."

"But——"

"Promise me."

"You don't——"

"Promise me."

Of course George had to promise ; with the reservation, admitted with much reluctance, that he might at least talk of it to others in this way. In speaking of others he was thinking of Lawley, who would talk of it and force him to talk of it in no other way.

At this point Miss Masters' voice, calling for Mabel, put an end to their deliberations. George, having taken a lingering leave, as if he were on the eve of embarking for Australia, went straight to the Post Office with the momentous letters. It was curious to feel, as he held them between his finger and thumb for a moment before dropping them into the box, that he was about to let go with them for ever his past life, his position and prospects. In another moment they were gone out of his hands, and, having thus burned his boats and bridges, he set out for Fenton to consult Archer Lawley.

CHAPTER XVIII.

FENTON FOLK.

WE possess one of the only three copies which were sold of a "Lecture on Local Names" given by Dr. Clancy, and printed at the request of an enthusiastic audience. To it we are glad to confess our obligation for the derivation of the word "Fenton." The village was so called because it was perched on a hill. The learned lecturer adduced the analogous derivations by antiphrasis not only of "*lucus a non lucendo*," but of "*ludus a non ludendo*," of "*bellum a nullâ re bellâ*," and of "*cælum a celando—quia apertum est*." "There were other theories anent the name," he said, "far fetched and fantastic theories, which it would be a mere waste of words to consider in the face of these two indisputable facts that the place was called Fen-ton, or town, and that it was seated on a hill." Anyhow, Fenton was seated on a hill, high above the hum and smoke of Wefton :—

In regions mild, of calm and serene air,
Above the smoke and stir of that dim spot.

It commanded a view of one of the loveliest of all the lovely valleys in the West Riding, the vista ending in—Wefton. It is said that Mr. Ruskin, on the occasion of a visit to Wefton, was brought by his host to admire the view from Fenton Crag. He looked at it long and earnestly till the involuntary tears came into his eyes, and he exclaimed, in a voice that faltered with emotion, "Out, damned spot! out, I say!" This view of murky Wefton notwithstanding, Fenton is so exquisitely situated that we might have expected it to be the favourite and fashionable suburb of that good town; yet, by some curious irony of fate, it is inhabited mostly by colliers, who work deep down in the bowels of the valley beneath, and seldom see the sun, to say nothing of the view it shines on. On this account, and on account also of the wretchedness of its endowment (140*l.* per annum), Fenton was considered so undesirable a living that Archer Lawley was presented to it. Only lay patronage, and rather reckless lay patronage, would have given such a man as Mr. Lawley the charge even of these few sheep in the wilderness. Certainly neither Dr. Clancy nor his lordship of Ribchester would have trusted him with a flock of goats. The man, by the accounts of his clerical brethren, who ought to know best, was hardly even a Churchman, not to say a Christian. They said that he once took a service without a surplice (the vestry key being lost), that he read the burial office over unbaptized adults and infants, that he had attended the funeral of a Unitarian minister, that he never read the Athanasian Creed, that he spoke of Apostolical Succession as an Irish pedigree, of the two Houses of Convocation as Pyramus and Thisbe played by Bottom and Co., and of Lord Penzance, of the Court of Arches, as Matthew Hopkins, the witch-finder. In a word, he

made light of all those things which all parties in the Church, as represented in Wefton, agreed to regard as of the most awful and vital importance. That such a man should have been appointed to a living by professing members of the Church of England was a lamentable abuse of patronage which shocked Dr. Clancy to the soul. It is true that the patrons asked Dr. Clancy to appoint to the post and that the vicar could induce no one to take it, not even his junior curate (an ex national schoolmaster, who was then within a month of his ordination as priest); still, surely in all England a fitter man than Mr. Lawley might have been found? Probably the patrons had not the means or will to search all England, and so they laid hands suddenly on Mr. Lawley who was glad to accept the living as an escape from an intolerable curacy. It is only fair to say at the same time that the people of Mr. Lawley's parish did not at all take the clerical view of the appointment. They were perfectly satisfied with their pastor. The fact is, they were one and all what Bacon calls "common people;" and as he says, "the common people understand not many excellent virtues. The lowest virtues draw praise from them; the middle virtues work in them astonishment or admiration; but of the highest virtues they have no sense or perceiving at all." The Fenton folk being, as we say, "common people," had no sense or perceiving of the highest ecclesiastical virtues of views and vestments, and would hardly have appreciated even Dr. Clancy himself, who was all views, like a sketch-book. They would probably, in their swinish inappreciation of what is ecclesiastically precious, have likened him to one of their own engines if all its steam was allowed to escape through the whistle and none turned on to the wheels. But Archer Lawley's virtues, such as they were, came within their narrow horizon, and "drew praise from them," and even love. They were a very warm-hearted people—as warm-hearted as any in the West Riding, and that is saying a great deal—and all their warmth of heart was drawn out by a man who seemed to consider helplessness of any kind as having a claim like a claim of kindred upon him. He had the deepest pity for the poor, and sympathy with their dreary lives and weary struggles; and when to poverty was added sickness or old age, or orphanage, there was no sacrifice of his own comfort he would not make for its relief. When one of Napoleon's suite at St. Helena would have bundled off the footpath out of his way an old woman bent double beneath the burden of age and of a few sticks she had gathered for firewood, the ex-emperor rebuked him and gave place to her with the words, "Respect the burden." Now Lawley, among his other eccentric notions, held that these words expressed the spirit of Christianity almost better than the Athanasian Creed. For himself, he always respected burdens of all kinds—of poverty, of sickness, of trouble, of the weakness of childhood, or of old age. And in his kindly dealings with those thus burdened he would always confer a favour as if he were receiving it. It was not to be wondered at, therefore, that the Fenton folk, with all their love for him—and they really did love him—could

not but admit among themselves that he was "soft," i.e. not quite "reet in his yed." He couldn't pass a dirty little squalling brat knocked into the gutter by his playmate without lifting him out and consoling him with a penny; nor an old woman gleaning crumbs of coal dropped from the waggons on the roads without helping to carry her heavy kit load. When old Betty Bartle, who lived all alone in a lair she called a room, was knocked down and run over, he had her brought to his house and nursed and doctored; and he sat up the night through with Dick o' Bob's, a collier, whom no one else dare go near, as he was supposed to have been seized with Asiatic cholera, of which there had been some cases in Weston. In truth, Archer Lawley, though by all clerical accounts a most discreditable clergyman, was a very kindly man, and a very able man besides. It is true, the Fenton folk "reckoned nowt on him as a praicher." He was not fit to hold a candle to the Rev. Ephraim Howlett, a neighbouring clergyman, one of Dr. Clancy's appointments, whose sermons were terrible as

A tale

Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
Signifying nothing.

And, in truth, Lawley was not a brilliant preacher by any means. He was homely, wholesome, and matter-of-fact, and seemed to tell them nothing they did not know already. Now the secret of popular preaching among the poor is, if possible, to preach always funeral sermons. But, if this is not possible always, then to explain to them all mysteries in each sermon. "*Cupidine humani ingenii libentius obscura creduntur*," saith Tacitus; and Cæsar might have had in his prophetic eye the popular preachers of our day when he wrote, '*Communi fit vitio nature, ut invisâ, latitantibus atque incognitis rebus magis confidamus, vehementiusque exterreamur*.'

When, however, we say that the would-be popular preacher to the poor should (failing a funereal subject) explain all mysteries, we do not advise his explaining them so clearly and conclusively that there can be no doubt or difficulty left in the meanest mind. This would be to err on the other side, for the poor like mysteries to be mysteriously explained. To make things too plain to them is to insult their understanding. "Sir Joshua," says Boswell, "once observed to Johnson that he had talked above the capacity of some people with whom they had been in company together. 'No matter, sir,' said Johnson, 'they consider it as a compliment to be talked to as if they were wiser than they are. So true is this, sir, that Baxter made it a rule in every sermon that he preached to say something that was above the capacity of his audience.'" And it would be a mistake to explain all mysteries too clearly, not for this reason only, but also because mystery in medicine is all but indispensable. In the eyes of the poor a sermon is like a prescription—the more energetic and mysterious it is the more potent must be the medi-

cine it prescribes. Now Lawley was not enigmatic and mysterious, but intelligible, and therefore contemptible as a preacher. Besides, he was a great cricketer, and it was absurd to suppose that a man who could handle a bat as he did could also handle a text in a masterly manner. The Fenton folk, however, thought well of the man, if not of his sermons, and, taking him altogether, would not have exchanged him even for the Rev. Ephraim Howlett.

On his part, Mr. Lawley also thought much of the Fentonians "Sweetest nut hath sourest rind." They were rough and sharp of speech and manner, but at heart most kindly and generous, and Lawley, at first disgusted, was at last delighted with them. He went in and out amongst them, welcome as sunshine, and was at home in every house in the place—except his own. For now we come to the skeleton in the cupboard—the MacGucken.

Lawley's house had not been built for a parsonage, but was a rambling old farmhouse—a random collection of after-thoughts put together piecemeal and higgledy-piggledy, generation after generation, as fantastic and incoherent as a dream. Of the score or so of rooms in it, Lawley and his servant occupied but four, and the rest were wasted; until in an evil hour it occurred to our eccentric friend, five years before the opening of our story, to convert it into a convalescent hospital for two or three children who had been ill with other than infectious disorders. It was a silly whim, no doubt; but he certainly paid more dearly for it than he deserved, since it led to his engagement of the MacGucken. The MacGucken had been a nurse in the children's ward of the Wefton Infirmary, and a very excellent nurse she was—clean, firm, kindly, patient, and indefatigable, but intensely and intolerably Yorkshire. Such a Pharisee never breathed in or out of Judæa. The woman could hardly make a bed without bragging of it, and bragging of it at such length and with such triumphant references to all the bad bedmakers in the world, that a man like Lawley would rather lie on straw for the rest of his life than have to pay daily this price for his bed. Not a day passed without a scene of this kind occurring at least once. The MacGucken would come to the study door and knock—she always knocked most scrupulously. Lawley would give a despairing look at the article he was deep in composing, and say meekly, "Come in."

"Mr. Lawley, sir, could you spare me a moment, sir, if *you* please?"

Lawley would rise with a gloomy resignation and follow her through the long and winding passage to the far-off kitchen. Striding into the middle of the kitchen with the mien of Lady Macbeth, she would turn, face her master with an expression that plainly said, "Now, be prepared," and, pointing to the fireplace, cry, "Just look at that, sir; look at that, sir, if you please."

Lawley looks vaguely and vainly at the fender, the fireirons, the

oven, the boiler, the fire, the hissing kettle upon it, the blinking cat beside it, the burnished ashpan beneath it. What was it? Was it something dreadful or admirable? He tries to throw into his face and voice an expression that would do for either: "Ah!"

"What do you think of that, sir?"

What *was* he to think? He hits happily upon a skeleton answer that would fit anything: "I don't know what to say, Nurse."

"Now, sir, you see for yourself! That's the way Sarah Jane does her work. I do believe she'd sit in the chair twirling her thumbs with that"—pointing to the still mysterious abomination—"staring her in the face all day, and never stir hand or foot to fettle it. It caps me how ever she gets her time on. It does indeed. She hasn't a half day's work to do any day in the week, let alone Sunday, and half of that wouldn't be done if it wasn't for me. I can't help myself. I must be amang it. I can no more see a job the like of that waiting to be done, and not do it, than I can hear a bairn cry and not go to it. When I was in the Infirmary them other nurses would let the handles of the doors get so as you wouldn't know whether they were brass or brick, and many and many's the time I couldn't sleep with them on my mind, and I've got up and gone round and scoured them, I have, till you could see the whole ward in one of them. Wheriver there was a job that was nobody's job, it was always Nurse MacGucken's job. And t' Doctor would say, t' haase Doctor—Sykes they called him—he'd say, 'What brings you down here, Nurse? This is not your place.' And I'd say, 'Yes, Doctor,' I'd say, 'wherever there's wark to do that nobody else will do is always Nurse MacGucken's place,' I'd say. And he'd say, 'Nurse, niver a better worker was born into this world.'"

By the way, to appreciate the MacGucken's modesty properly, it must be remembered that in her system of ethics hard work was the simple sum and substance of all virtue: "'Niver a better worker was born into this world,' he'd say. And I'd say, 'It's my one fault; I know it is. I can't help it, Doctor. I can't see wark going to waste, as a body may say——'"

At this point the wretched Sarah Jane, the Helot who was the foil to this Spartan, would be heard coming along the passage, and the MacGucken would pause, and Lawley would slink away respited. But only respited. Half-an-hour later, when he had happily forgotten her existence, and was deep in his work again, that thrice-confounded knock would be heard.

"Come in!"

"Now, sir!"

"Yes?"

"You'll see a difference now, sir, I promise you."

There was nothing for it but the wretched man must leave his work and follow her again to the kitchen.

"Now, sir! Does it look the same thing?"

Well, it did. Except that the cat had gone he couldn't see the shadow of a shade of difference in anything. It wouldn't do to say, "No; the cat's gone, I see;" so he said safely, "It's better now."

"Better! It's ten shillings better. It's just as when it comed through the shop—so it is. When I was at the Weston Infirmary," &c., &c.

Lawley was lucky if he had to submit to these maddening interruptions only twice a day. And yet he put up with them. The fact is, he was a most abject coward where a woman, and especially a woman-servant, was concerned. The MacGucken had him, and felt she had him, wholly at her mercy. So Lawley ate his leek, and eke he swore, so to speak, at her from the pulpit. From this coward's castle he preached sermon after sermon against Pharisaism as a special West Riding characteristic—as indeed it was—but with a special aim at his enemy. Even this cowardly revenge, however, he had to forego after the delivery of a terrific blow at her from the text of the Pharisee and publican parable. He was no sooner seated in his arm-chair on his return from church than she attacked him before she had taken her things off.

"The sermon came home to me this morning, sir."

Lawley shivered in his shoes, and repented abjectly of his temerity. "Ah!" he gasped nervously.

"Yes, sir. Before I went to the Infirmary I was in service with a publican. Eh! but he was a shocker, ye mind; allus a-swearin and a-calling names, and a-treating folk as if they were the very dirt under his feet; just for all the world like him you was praichin about. And I told him one day just what you said, sir, that he wasn't one bit better than other folk, nor as good; and he gave me notice then and there to leave, and I lost my place through telling the truth plain out. But truth I've allus told and allus will—allus." When excited she slipped back into Yorkshire.

Lawley tried to explain that she mistook the Pharisee for the publican, and mistook the publican for a beer-seller, whereas he was a farmer of the taxes.

"No, nor Slicer wasn't, in a way of speaking, a beer-seller altogether, sir, but a bit of a farmer, as you say, sir; and kep' three cows and a pony; and I had all the milk to look after, and the butter to make, and many's the time the missus said to me—she was noan a bad sort of a woman, warn't the missus, and she and me had niver a wrang word all the time I was with her—'Mary Ann,' she says, for she allus called me Mary Ann—'Mary Ann,' she says, 'there's thim that can make butter, and there's thim that can make cartwheel-grease. But of all the butter-makers I've iver had, and I've had a many (for you know what a sharp tongue Slicer has, and he sends 'em packing faster than I can get 'em, he does)—but of all the butter-makers I've iver had, there's none,' she says, 'could come up to you, Mary Ann, for yellowness and cheesiness; and as for honesty, I never mark a till sixpence now; 'thim was

her very words, and she lived near Bradford, past the 'Cock and Bottle,' up the Otley Road."

Lawley gave up preaching personal sermons. Nor was this the only price he had to pay for the incomparable MacGucken. Though in robust health he was regarded by her as in an extremely critical condition; and as she had so long to do not only with invalids, but with infantile invalids, she would treat him as a sick child. Holding beef to be indigestible and pastry deadly, she restricted him to mutton—mostly mince or chops—and to sago and arrowroot puddings. These last the Helot, who enjoyed the reversion of them, pronounced "the nothingest things she had ever tasted;" but Lawley took them meekly, as part of the dispensation. Indeed, if this was all, he would not have minded much, for as regards food he was as imbecile as the dotard Barzillai, who tasted not what he ate or what he drank. But this was not all. She was also always on the look-out for an excuse to dose him. If he coughed, or even blew his nose, she would administer to him either an earthy decoction she called herb tea, or a gruesome gruel in which he detected at least two of the three ingredients of gunpowder—nitre and sulphur. This he would find in his bedroom on one side of a roaring fire, and at the other, on a chair, a red petticoat and a strip of flannel which looked as if in its youth it had been a garter. The garter he knew was meant to be bound about his throat, but what purpose the red petticoat was meant to serve he did not know. Nothing would have induced our misogynist to touch either of these articles with the tips of his fingers, yet the noisy resentment of the MacGucken must on no account be provoked by their appearing next morning to have been unused. So Lawley would take them up with the tongs, and lay them one upon the other in a corner, and smuggle up his dog and induce him to lie all night upon them to give them the comfortable look of having been slept in. But as even the dog couldn't be induced to drink the gruel, it had to be spooned into the fire.

There was not much to complain of in this grandmotherliness? Well, no; but there was the next morning. Lawley would hardly have got into his study before she'd bustle in—breakfast being put back half an hour for the purpose—and take out of him the value of her consideration ten times told in brag and obligation.

"Well, sir?"

"Eh?" Lawley loathed the odious self-complacency of her manner on these occasions.

"You found all ready, sir, last night? I thought I'd surprise you. If I had mentioned it you'd have said, 'No, Nurse, thank you, there's nothing the matter.' But it isn't like that I'd be in the Wefton Infirmary fifteen years and not know a churchyard cough when I hear it, a-tearing and a-wheezin' back and forards like a saw. I couldn't sleep for hearkening for it. I couldn't indeed."

This, like many of the incomparable MacGucken's statements, must

be taken with a grain and a half of salt; for, as she slept with the children at the other end of the rambling old house, only a telephone could have conveyed a cough to her.

"But I think I have given it a check, for you look a deal better this morning, sir, a long seet better; and well you may, for I niver knew that gruel to fail. It's what I allus takes myself, for I'd niver give you anything, sir, I wouldn't take myself." This last boast was always on the Incomparable's lips, and was one of the few of her brags that were true without qualification. For, indeed, it is only justice to her to say that she always did treat Lawley quite like one of the family. "Yes, it's what I allus takes myself when I'm that done with work that I can't bide to stand, and I shiver so that I shake the chair I sit in, and break out all ovver in a cold sweat," &c., &c.

Sometimes, after half-an-hour of this, Lawley would be wrought up to a pitch of such exasperation that, if he had had a spark of courage, he would have given the woman notice then and there. But he was a poor creature where women were concerned, and he would at last leave the study in the enemy's possession, and go into the garden and walk violently up and down and work it off a bit. Here George, coming to consult him, found him walking like Weston, as for a wager, up and down a side-walk.

"Kneeshaw!" he cried excitedly, after they had greeted each other, "I must give it up."

"What?"

"The living. The Church."

"I thought so."

"It's become insupportable."

"Just what I came to say to you."

"You! what's she to you?"

"Who?"

"The MacGucken."

"Oh!"

"It's the only way to get rid of her."

CHAPTER XIX.

FRIENDS IN COUNCIL.

LAWLEY was not jesting by any means. He really meditated burning the house, so to speak, to get rid of the vermin. Being in the habit of putting press work off to the last moment and working then at a pressure of two hundred and fifty pounds to the square inch, he would sometimes get into a state of such nervous irritability as made a noisy interruption of any kind intolerable. On the day of George's visit he had been in this way racing the post, when in came the MacGucken for the fourth time that day, and her

blatant brag had the soothing effect upon him of the strut and screech of a peacock. When he could stand it no longer he simply locked the MS. in his desk and shot out of the room like a shell. The MacGucken concluded he was ill (the true reason was not even conceivable by her), and hustled off to prepare him some herb tea; while Lawley, as we have seen, was found by George letting off steam in the garden.

It was impossible for George, notwithstanding his friend's glum face and his own trouble, not to laugh at Lawley's sole hope of escape from his Tsetse fly.

"Couldn't you try giving up the hospital, first?"

"It wouldn't do. She'd not leave. She'd only give all her time to me," with a rueful grin at this appalling consummation.

"Then I tell you what." I'd go away and give her notice by letter, and not come back till she had cleared out."

"I did," said Lawley, in a tone of profound despondency, "but it was no good. She wrote back to say that she knew things were not made as comfortable for me as they ought to have been, but that I was to send away Sarah Jane, and take in her stead the MacGucken's sister (who might be persuaded to come to *me* for a few pounds more wage than was wasted on Sarah Jane), and then I should be perfectly happy, and might see myself in the bars of the grate."

Lawley had perforce to join in the laugh with which George greeted this characteristic letter.

"And Sarah Jane," continued Lawley, "is the best servant I ever had. I hardly ever see her, and she never opens her lips to me when I do. But that woman——" Lawley's face filled in this ferocious aposiopesis. "In the summer I can write in the class-room of the school in the evenings, but for the rest of the year a night-school's held in it, and I have nowhere to go. I'm not safe in my bedroom. If I stay half-an-hour in it she comes up and knocks and asks if I have been taken ill, and then she's sure to concoct some devil's broth for me to drink at night. No; I don't see anything for it but to resign. I don't, indeed."

"I think I'd try giving her notice again, first," hesitatively suggested his feeble fellow-bachelor.

"It's easy to talk. Besides, she'd not take it, and she'd be more attentive than ever after it, as she was after the last."

"You might marry," hazarded George, after a pause, in a still more doubtful manner.

"Marry! What! cast out a devil through Beelzebub? It's the cure of the Médecin Malgré Lui for Geronte's being deafened now and then by Lucinde, to deafen him altogether."

These pleasantries against the sex of his arch-enemy had the soothing effect on Lawley's irritation that Mr. Shandy's caustic witticisms had upon his ill-humour. And they not only dissipated the remains of his ill-temper, but turned his thoughts to George's affair of the heart.

"I ought to ask your pardon, Kneeshaw, as a Benedick : how is your affair getting on ?"

Then George told all with much humiliation of heart.

"Did you say you had posted the letters to Clancy and Pickles?"

"Yes ; I posted them on my way here."

Lawley was silent. He couldn't say anything pleasant. This vacillation in his eyes was contemptible, and cruel too, for his thoughts lingered about Mabel as a miracle of womanhood.

George was at no loss to interpret his silence.

"You can't think worse of me than I do of myself, Lawley."

"What are you going to do ?" asked Lawley abruptly. He couldn't sincerely say anything in mitigation of George's self-condemnation.

"I don't know. I was thinking of emigrating."

"Emigrating ! As what ?"

"I thought of buying land in Canada to farm."

"You don't know much about farming, I suppose ?"

"No. I know nothing of anything," said George despondently.

"Did you ever try writing ?"

"I have contributed papers to an entomological journal, if you call that writing. Dry and technical descriptions of what I have noticed, as mechanical as reporting, and they have been accepted rather as a favour done to me. But the few attempts I've made at literature proper have been failures. No ; my writing wouldn't pay for the paper it's written on."

"Well, it's not a thing to marry on at best—'a great staff but a sorry crutch,' as Scott calls it. There's that first cousin to parsoning, pedagogy."

George shook his head. "I've neither inclination nor qualification for it. There's nothing for it but farming in Australia or Canada, Lawley."

"I don't think you've much inclination or qualification for that either," growled the relentless Lawley. "And what of Miss Masters ? Is she to seek her fortune with you, or wait for you till you have found it ?"

"Look here, Lawley," cried George, stopping suddenly on the path and turning to stand face to face with his friend. "I know what I seem to you, and what I have been—silly, senseless, selfish, brutal—no words are too strong for it. Yet, I tell you that, though I love that girl like my life, I would be glad—*glad*, I tell you, if she could forget me."

There was no disbelieving and no resisting the intense earnestness of George's haggard face. Lawley was moved by the misery in it, and put his hand soothingly on his shoulder.

"It's too late, now, Kneeshaw," he said sadly, in a tone that belied the seeming reproach of the words. The two friends walked up and down together in sad silence for a few moments.

"May I ask, Kneeshaw, how much money you have to start upon?"

"About one thousand two hundred pounds."

"You will not think it a liberty if I offer you a loan of a few hundreds I have no use for?" asked Lawley, hurriedly and shamefacedly. "You see," he hastened to add, "I shall be a rich man in a year or two, as I'm my uncle's heir; and, besides, the money is really and truly lying idle." They had known each other only for a few months, but in that time each had shown the other his whole heart, and a life's acquaintance would not have brought them nearer together.

"Thank you, Lawley," said George, taking and pressing for a moment his friend's hand; "but I believe I should be better able to manage a small farm than a big one to begin with. I promise you that if I find I need it I shall ask you for it."

Lawley, however, was not satisfied. He pressed the matter with such eagerness and yet with such delicacy—putting it, as he always put any kindness, as a favour he was not offering, but asking—that George at last consented to accept such a loan as would raise his little capital to two thousand pounds.

Lawley, being allowed his way, felt towards George as we always feel towards the man we befriend. For benefits stir an even kindlier feeling in the heart of the benefactor than in that of the beneficiary. Lawley, therefore, already moved by George's miserable remorse, was conquered by his acceptance of the loan, and began to make the allowances which we hope our readers, too, will make, for his vacillation. Even the image of Mabel, which, a minute ago, lingered in his mind as an aggravation of George's recklessness, appeared now to him as its palliation. Who could know such a girl without loving her, or love her without forgetting all else in his love? This was not bad for a misogynist, who had good reason for his misogyny, too. Still he was perplexed, as well he might be, with the suddenness of George's changes of mood and mind. Within a week he had written letters to decline, to accept, to resign St. George's, and had resolved not to try to link his precarious fortunes to Mabel's, had linked them, and had repented of it. It was not enough to say that within that week George had realised the full force at once of a feeling and of a conviction, each of which had grown insensibly to an extraordinary strength; or to say that this feeling and this conviction had a terrible struggle for the mastery in his mind. There remained besides to be explained, what to Lawley seemed inexplicable, the absolute and decisive victory which the feeling won yesterday and the victory, equally absolute and decisive, which the conviction won to-day. It seemed to Lawley to indicate nothing less than a mind like a wind-shaken reed. Yet, in truth, the feeling itself, as we have said already, helped George's conscience to conquer.

For Love himself took part against himself,
And Duty loved of Love.

For Mabel's love, which Lawley thought had lulled George's conscience to sleep, only woke it to a keener sense of the falsehood of his position, and decided at once and once for all his wavering resolution. Such a love, George thought, would make a lying slave brave and honest; and for himself he felt

The nobler through her love,
O three times less unworthy!

We have taken the opportunity of Mr. Lawley's absence to explain the different standpoints from which the two friends looked at the situation. For Lawley, who was an inveterate smoker, had gone in to fetch out pipes. On his return he said, while filling his pipe—

"I thought you had made your mind up to give the Church another chance under more favourable circumstances."

"So I had, and so, perhaps, I might have 'given it another chance,' as you put it pleasantly, if she had refused me."

"If she had refused you!"

"Yes; Lawley, the love of a girl like that makes a man honest in spite of himself."

Lawley was silent for a moment, pondering upon this effect of love. "You have discovered the true Ithuriel's spear, Cupid's arrow:—

No falsehood can endure
Touch of celestial temper.

Still I think, if you told her all, she would herself have advised you as I did."

"I did tell her all."

"Yes?"

"She said I must, of course, quit the Church."

"Did she?" exclaimed Lawley in a tone of amazement. This girl was by no means to be confounded with the rest of her sex. "And wasn't shocked?"

"Shocked? No. She seemed to look at it as a trouble more than as a sin. I think she had her father in her mind; and, besides, she was quite assured I should come back in time."

"She *was* of my mind, then?"

"Well, no; not exactly," said George, smiling. "When I told her your advice she couldn't believe it was yours. You must know she has an immense veneration for you, and I put the thing so clumsily to her that she thought you advised me to go on saying what I didn't believe until I came to believe it."

This didn't seem an altogether perverted version of his advice even to Lawley himself. But it certainly set it in rather a preposterous light. The thing, however, which most struck Lawley and lingered afterwards in his memory was the news that "she had an immense veneration for him." He was too proud to be vain. He thought little of most people's praise, and least of all of the good opinion of the sex; but

Mabel's good opinion was a different thing, and a very pleasant thing to him. When a good thing does come out of Galilee, we prize it in proportion to its rarity, and Mabel seemed to Lawley such an exception to her sex that he was surprised into an extraordinary and perhaps extravagant opinion of her. He pulled silently at his pipe for a few moments, chewing the while the cud of sweet and bitter fancies.

"She has no great veneration for my honesty," he said at last.

"She thought at first that your views were as extreme as mine; but I set her right as to this, and you still keep your pedestal. Still, she certainly does seem to have extraordinary ideas of clerical honesty or dishonesty," continued George with some bitterness. "She doesn't seem to think, for instance, that a clergyman's standard of right and wrong, truth and falsehood, ought to be so very much lower than a layman's."

"My withers are unwrung," said Lawley placidly.

"You! How could you think I meant you? I was thinking of the Wefton chapter-meeting. You should have heard Ainslie and Clancy proving opposite things from the same book."

"The book is like the dam there," said Lawley, pointing down to the reservoir of a factory; "it reflects heaven, but every man that looks into it sees only his own reflection. And as for the Wefton chapter-meeting, it is like the gathering on that common. There are a flock of geese, some sheep, two donkeys, and a pig, all grazing on the same grass, and each assimilating what suits itself. The same pasture clothes the geese with feathers, the sheep with wool, the donkeys with hair, and the pig with bristles. A clergyman's conscience, Kneeshaw, is like his digestion: it has a wonderfully assimilative power."

Lawley had certainly no reason to love his cloth, and his words were bitter; but weren't they stones thrown from a glass house? This thought couldn't but cross George's mind and, perhaps, Lawley's own also. And yet, that the MacGucken should be his sole reason for resignation, if he resigned!

"*You're out of Egypt, anyhow,*" continued Lawley. "When do you think of sailing?"

"The sooner the better," with a sigh from the very bottom of his heart given to Mabel.

"I shall see you off, if you'll allow me, old fellow," said Lawley warmly, striving in this way to express his sympathy.

George understood his friend well enough to know that this offer meant more from him than his other offer of money, of which Lawley was extraordinarily careless.

"Will you? I don't know anything I should like better, unless—unless—Lawley, if you would promise to write to me now and then and tell me anything you know or hear about her, I should leave England with a lighter heart."

"Of course I shall write to you. But she'll write herself?"

"I don't know. If her father forbids her, she won't."

"But I shall never see her, or even hear of her after you go."

"You might call," urged George persuasively.

"I can't get on with them," pleaded Lawley, alluding to the intractability of the sex in general.

"You got on very well together the other day. You might have known each other for years."

"She's not like the rest, certainly. But I should only bore her."

"Bore her! Shall I tell you what she said about you yesterday? 'That a talk with you was like looking through illustrations of the best authors by the best artists.' She has an extraordinary opinion of you."

"I should soon disenchant her. Well; if she is forbidden to write, I promise you to call and report."

The two friends were silent for a minute or two, lost in anxious thought: George torturing himself with the fear of all direct intercourse between Mabel and him being stopped, and Lawley troubled about the possible consequences to himself of intimacy with Miss Mabel Masters. He began to feel a keen personal interest in Kneeshaw's being permitted to communicate himself with her.

"Doesn't her father know of your engagement?"

"Her father! He lives in Laputa. When I asked his consent at first, he wasn't quite sure whether she was twelve or twenty, and then he couldn't see what he had to do with so small a matter."

"He's not likely to interfere, then, one way or the other."

"No; not unless his sister suggests it to him. But he has made all his authority over to her, and you know what she is. I can't imagine how a girl like Mabel can come of such a strain."

"It's wonderful, no doubt, how

The music of the moon
Sleeps in the plain eggs of the nightingale.

I don't know her father; but certainly there's not much of her aunt in her. That woman regards the world as a looking-glass in which to see flattering reflections of herself. By the way, Kneeshaw," he asked, as a horrible misgiving chilled his blood, "am I likely to see much of her when I call?"

"Not if you call in the morning. She's never down before twelve."

"That's very early to call, isn't it?"

"Then she has, besides, a beauty sleep every afternoon from two to three, of which I often take advantage. I did to-day."

"I had more than an hour of her to myself on the day of the picnic, and she put me to the rack the whole time to extort compliments. She's a kind of porcelain MacGucken, by Jove!" he cried, warming up with the remembrance of that bad hour; "and ten minutes of her goes a long way. Not that I'd mind it if it did you any good, you know," he added with his usual generosity, "but there's no use facing it for nothing."

George, however, reassured him that he might venture without foolhardiness any day between two and half-past three, as she took at least half-an-hour to make herself presentable after her beauty sleep.

Still Lawley was not quite happy in his engagement as internuncius. "If you would condescend to flatter her, I don't think she'd interfere between you," he said.

"I don't know. She wouldn't have consented to our engagement if I hadn't been vicar-designate of St. George's, and now I'm not a curate even. No; I'm afraid she'll influence her brother to forbid her writing. Besides, even if she was allowed to write, there are some things she wouldn't tell me—if she was persecuted, for instance, or made miserable on my account. Lawley, you couldn't do me a greater kindness than to keep up your acquaintance with her in any case, and let me know how things go on there."

"I don't see what good it would do you to know she was made miserable if you couldn't help her."

"At least it would do me good to know she was *not* made miserable, as I should be always fancying she was, no matter how cheerfully she wrote; and this you might be able to tell me."

"You'll think I'm making a great fuss about a small matter, Kneeshaw; but the truth is I feel I'm not the man for so delicate a mission. If you can't get better, of course I shall undertake it, and do the best I can."

George thought Lawley's self-distrust sprang from the very opposite of its true source. He imagined that his misogynist friend feared the embarrassment of Mabel's society, while what he really feared was its fascination. "In the matter of love," says a Spanish proverb, "you begin when you will, and leave off when you can;" and Lawley felt that he might have only the beginning of this business in his own power.

"I know no one else that could do it for me, and there's no one else she would like so much to see," urged George. "I think you'd get to like her when you knew her."

Just what Lawley thought.

"I'm not quite such a Goth as you think, Kneeshaw. I don't object to the commission on that ground at all. I simply think I'm not the man for it. But there's no help if you can get no one else. How often would you wish me to call?"

"If I said as often as you write, I'm afraid your letters would be few and far between. I think you'd better not burden yourself with any fixed arrangement."

"Well, perhaps it's better for both to leave it open, and then you'll not be disappointed, and I shall be easier about it. I hate work I *have* to do in a certain time, and I've enough of that kind on hand already," his thoughts reverting to the odious interruptions of the MacGucken, whose image, in turn, suggested tea. "It's about time we had some

tea, though. I say, Kneeshaw, would you mind going in and ordering it?—she'll not fasten on you."

But she did. Taking for her text the herb tea she had just brewed, she described to George at great length, and in minute detail, all the means by which she managed to keep her master alive—not omitting the garter nor the red petticoat, which last, it seems, was meant to be wrapped round the head as a cure for a cold. (Lawley in his most savage mood never suspected its being meant for more than a sentimental blanket.) Nor did she confine her care to physical means of recruiting him, but had recourse also to mental stimulants. She never left him too long to himself, as he'd mope and that; but she would break off often three or four times in the day in the very midst of her cleaning to come in and talk to him, and rouse him up a bit like. Yet for all, at times, he'd go that low that even after her talking to him for half-an-hour together he wouldn't look a bit the cheerfuller! The fact was (this in the mysterious whisper of the keeper of a dangerous lunatic) in his state of health he wasn't fit to be left to himself, and leave him to himself she would not, even if Tuesday's work should stare her in the face on Wednesday morning; not that it ever did or ever would, for work was work, "choose how"—and no one could say of her that she ever left one day's work atop of another, like that pile of dirty dinner plates which Sarah Jane should have washed three hours ago; but there they were, and there they'd be till she took 'em in hand herself, for there was nothing in this house a'most, from the beds to the boots, that she hadn't to follow."

At this point George pretended to hear Lawley call, and shouting, "Yes. All right!" escaped.

"Lawley, do you know what the red petticoat's for?" George had already heard of the abomination from his friend.

"What?"

"A turban to be wrapped about the head; she's just told me."

Lawley's face was a study as he shuddered. It was the face of a man who finds a cockroach in his soup.

Spring Wanderings.

ANA-CAPRI.

THE storm clouds at this season, though it is the bloom of May, are daily piled in sulky or menacing masses over Vesuvius and the Abruzzi, frothing out their curls of moulded mist across the bay and climbing the heavens with toppling castle towers and domes of alabaster.

We made the most of a tranquil afternoon, when there was an armistice of storm, to mount the proud bluff of Solaro. A ruined fort caps that limestone bulwark; and there we lay together, drinking the influences of sea, sun, and wind. Immeasurably deep beneath us plunged the precipices, deep, deep descending to a bay where fisher boats were rocking, diminished to a scale that made the fishermen in them invisible. Low down above the waters wheeled white gulls, and higher up the hawks and ospreys of the cliff sailed out of sunlight into shadow. Immittigable strength is in the moulding of this limestone, and sharp, clear definiteness marks yon clothing of scant brushwood where the fearless goats are browsing. The sublime of sculpturesque in crag structure is here, refined and modulated by the sweetness of sea distances. For the air came pure and yielding over the unfooted sea; and at the basement of those fortress cliffs the sea was dreaming in its caves; and far away, to east and south and west, soft light was blent with mist upon the surface of the shimmering waters.

The distinction between prospects viewed from a mountain overlooking a great plain, or viewed from heights that, like this, dominate the sea, principally lies in this: that while the former only offer cloud shadows cast upon the fields below our feet, in the latter these shadows are diversified with cloud reflections. This gives superiority in qualities of colour, and variety of tone, and luminous effect to the sea, compensating in some measure for the lack of those associations which render the outlook over a wide extent of populated land so thrilling. The emergence of towered cities into sunlight at the skirts of moving shadows, the liquid lapse of rivers half disclosed by windings among woods, the upturned mirrors of unruffled lakes, are wanting to the sea. For such episodes the white sails of vessels, with all their wistfulness of going to and fro on the mysterious deep, are but a poor exchange. Yet the sea-lover may justify his preference by appealing to the beauty of empurpled shadows, toned by amethyst or opal, or shining with violet light, reflected from the clouds that cross and find in those dark shields a mirror. There are suggestions, too, of immensity, of liberty, of action, presented by the bound-

less horizons and the changeful changeless tracts of ocean which no plain possesses.

It was nigh upon sunset when we descended to Ana-Capri. That evening the clouds assembled suddenly. The armistice of storm was broken. They were terribly blue, and the sea grew dark as steel beneath them till the moment when the sun's lip reached the last edge of the waters. Then a courier of rosy flame sent forth from him passed swift across the gulf, touching, where it trod, the waves with accidental fire. The messenger reached Naples; and in a moment, as by some diabolical illumination, the sinful city kindled into light like glowing charcoal. From Posilippo on the left, along the palaces of the Chiaja, up to St. Elmo on the hill, past Santa Lucia, down on the Marinella, beyond Portici, beyond Torre del Greco, where Vesuvius towered up aloof, an angry mount of amethystine gloom, the conflagration spread and reached Pompeii, and dwelt on Torre dell' Annunziata. Stationary, lurid, it smouldered while the day died slowly. The long, densely populated sea-line from Pozzuoli to Castellammare burned and smoked with intensest incandescence, sending a glare of fiery mist against the threatening blue behind, and fringing with pomegranate-coloured blots the water where no light now lingered. It is difficult to bend words to the use required. The scene, in spite of natural suavity and grace, had become like Dante's first glimpse of the City of Dis—like Sodom and Gomorrah when fire from heaven descended on their towers before they crumbled into dust.

FROM CAPRI TO ISCHIA.

After this, for several days, Libeccio blew harder. No boats could leave or come to Capri. From the piazza parapet we saw the wind scooping the surface of the waves, and flinging spray-fleeces in sheets upon the churning water. As they broke on Cape Campanella the rollers climbed in foam—how many feet?—and blotted out the olive trees above the headland. The sky was always dark with hanging clouds and masses of low-lying vapour, very moist, but scarcely raining—lightning without thunder in the night.

Such weather is unexpected in the middle month of May, especially when the olives are blackened by December storms, and the orange trees despoiled of foliage, and the tendrils of the vines yellow with cold. The walnut trees have shown no sign of making leaves. Only the figs seem to have suffered little.

It had been settled that we should start upon the first seafaring dawn for Ischia or Sorrento, according as the wind might set; and I was glad when, early one morning, the captain of the *Serena* announced a moderate sirocco. When we reached the little quay we found the surf of the Libeccio still rolling heavily into the gulf. A gusty south-easter crossed it, tearing spray-crests from the swell as it went plunging onward. The sea was rough enough; but we made fast sailing, our captain steering

with a skill which it was beautiful to watch, his five oarsmen picturesquely grouped beneath the straining sail. The sea slapped and broke from time to time on our windward quarter, drenching the boat with brine; and now and then she scooped into the shoulder of a wave as she shot sidling up it. Meanwhile enormous masses of leaden-coloured clouds formed above our heads and on the sea-line; but these were always shifting in the strife of winds, and the sun shone through them petulantly. As we climbed the rollers, or sank into their trough, the outline of the bay appeared in glimpses, shyly revealed, suddenly withdrawn from sight; the immobility and majesty of mountains contrasted with the weltering waste of water round us—now blue and garish where the sunlight fell, now shrouded in squally rain-storms, and then again sullen beneath a vaporous canopy. Each of these vignettes was photographed for one brief second on the brain, and swallowed by the hurling drift of billows. Art could not render any conception of the changes of colour in the sea, passing from tawny cloud-reflections and surfaces of glowing violet to bright blue or impenetrable purple flecked with boiling foam, according as a light-illuminated or a shadowed facet of the moving mass was turned to sight.

Half-way across the gulf the sirocco lulled; the sail was lowered, and we had to make the rest of the passage by rowing. Under the lee of Ischia we got into comparatively quiet water; though here the beautiful Italian sea was yellowish green with churned-up sand, like an unripe orange. We passed the castle on its rocky island, with the domed church which has been so often painted in *gouache* pictures through the last two centuries, and soon after noon we came to Casamicciola.

LA PICCOLA SENTINELLA.

Casamicciola is a village on the north side of the island, in its centre, where the visitors to the mineral baths of Ischia chiefly congregate. One of its old-established inns is called *La Piccola Sentinella*. The first sight on entrance is an open gallery, with a pink wall on which bloom magnificent cactuses, sprays of thick-clustering scarlet and magenta flowers. This is a rambling house, built in successive stages against a hill, with terraces and verandahs opening on unexpected gardens to the back and front. Beneath its long irregular façade there spreads a wilderness of orange trees and honeysuckles and roses, verbenas, geraniums and mignonette, snapdragons, gazenias and stocks, exceeding bright and fragrant, with the green slopes of Monte Epomeo for a background and Vesuvius for far distance. There are wonderful bits of detail in this garden. One dark, thick-foliaged olive, I remember, leaning from the tufa over a lizard-haunted wall, feathered waist-high in huge acanthus-leaves. The whole rich orchard ground of Casamicciola is dominated by Monte Epomeo, the extinct volcano which may be called the *raison d'être* of Ischia; for this island is nothing but a mountain lifted by the

energy of fire from the sea basement. Its fantastic peaks and ridges, sulphur-coloured, dusty grey, and tawny, with brushwood in young leaf upon the cloven flanks, form a singular pendant to the austere but more artistically modelled limestone crags of Capri. No two islands that I know, within so short a space of sea, offer two pictures so different in style and quality of loveliness. The inhabitants are equally distinct in type. Here, in spite of what De Musset wrote somewhat affectedly about the peasant girls—

Ischia ! c'est là qu'on a des yeux,
C'est là qu'un corsage amoureux
Serre la hanche.
Sur un bas rouge bien tiré
Brille, sous le jupon doré,
La mule blanche—

in spite of these lines I did not find the Ischian women eminent, as those of Capri are, for beauty. But the young men have fine, loose, faun-like figures, and faces that would be strikingly handsome but for too long and prominent noses. They are a singular race, graceful in movement.

Evening is divine in Ischia. From the topmost garden terrace of the inn one looks across the sea toward Terracina, Gaeta, and those descending mountain buttresses, the Phlegræan plains, and the distant snows of the Abruzzi. Rain-washed and luminous, the sunset sky held Hesper trembling in a solid green of beryl. Fireflies flashed among the orange blossoms. Far away in the obscurity of eastern twilight glared the smouldering cone of Vesuvius—a crimson blot upon the darkness—a Cyclops' eye, bloodshot and menacing.

The company in the Piccola Sentinella, young and old, were decrepit, with an odd, rheumatic, shrivelled look upon them. The dining-room reminded me, as certain rooms are apt to do, of a ship's saloon. I felt as though I had got into the cabin of the *Flying Dutchman*, and that all these people had been sitting there at meat a hundred years, through storm and shine, for ever driving onward over immense waves in an enchanted calm.

ISCHIA AND FORIO.

One morning we drove along the shore, up hill and down, by the Porto d'Ischia to the town and castle. This country curiously combines the qualities of Corfu and Catania. The near distance, so richly cultivated, with the large volcanic slopes of Monte Epomeo rising from the sea, is like Catania. Then, across the gulf, are the bold outlines and snowy peaks of the Abruzzi, recalling Albanian ranges. Here, as in Sicily, the old lava is overgrown with prickly pear and red valerian. Mesembrianthemums—I must be pardoned this word, for I cannot omit those fleshy-leaved creepers, with their wealth of gaudy blossoms, shaped like sea anemones, coloured like strawberry and pine-apple cream-ices—mesembrianthemums, then, tumble in torrents from the

walls, and large-cupped white convolvuluses curl about the hedges. The Castle Rock, with Capri's refined sky-coloured outline breaking its hard profile on the horizon, is one of those exceedingly picturesque objects just too theatrical to be artistic. It seems ready-made for a back scene in *Musaniello*, and cries out to the chromo-lithographer, "Come and make the most of me!" Yet this morning all things, in sea, earth, and sky, were so delicately tinted and bathed in pearly light that it was difficult to be critical.

In the afternoon we took the other side of the island, driving through Laccia to Forio. One gets right round the bulk of Epomeo, and looks up into a weird region called Le Falange, where white lava streams have poured in two broad irregular torrents among broken precipices. Forio itself is placed at the end of a piano, boldly thrust into the sea; and its furthest promontory bears a pilgrimage church, intensely white and glaring.

There is something arbitrary in the memories we make of places casually visited, dependent as they are upon our mood at the moment or on an accidental interweaving of impressions which the *genius loci* blends for us. Of Forio two memories abide with me. The one is of a young woman, with very fair hair, in a light blue dress, standing beside an older woman in a garden. There was a flourishing pomegranate tree above them. The whiteness and the dreamy smile of the young woman seemed strangely out of tune with her strong-toned southern surroundings. I could have fancied her a daughter of some moist north-western isle of Scandinavian seas. My other memory is of a lad, brown, handsome, powerfully-featured, thoughtful, lying curled up in the sun upon a sort of ladder in his house court, profoundly meditating. He had a book in his hand, and his finger still marked the place where he had read. He looked as though a Columbus or a Campanella might emerge from his earnest, fervent, steadfast adolescence. Driving rapidly along, and leaving Forio in all probability for ever, I kept wondering whether those two lives, discerned as though in vision, would meet—whether she was destined to be his evil genius, whether posterity would hear of him and journey to his birthplace in this world-neglected Forio. Such reveries are futile. Yet who entirely resists them?

MONTE EPOMEIO.

About three on the morning which divides the month of May into two equal parts I woke and saw the waning moon right opposite my window, stayed in her descent upon the slope of Epomeo. Soon afterwards Christian called me, and we settled to ascend the mountain. Three horses and a stout black donkey, with their inevitable grooms, were ordered; and we took for guide a lovely faun-like boy, goat-faced, goat-footed, with gentle manners and pliant limbs swaying beneath the breath of impulse. He was called Giuseppe.

The way leads past the mineral baths and then strikes uphill, at first through lanes cut deep in the black lava. The trees meet almost overhead. It is like Devonshire, except that one half hopes to see tropical foxgloves with violet bells and downy leaves sprouting among the lush grasses and sweet-scented ferns upon those gloomy, damp, warm walls. After this we skirted a *maquis* of arbutus, and came upon the long volcanic ridge, with divinest outlook over Procida and Miseno toward Vesuvius. Then once more we had to dive into brown sandstone gullies, extremely steep, where the horses almost burst their girths in scrambling, and the grooms screamed, exasperating their confusion with encouragements and curses. Straight or bending as a willow wand, Giuseppe kept in front. I could have imagined he had stepped to life from one of Lionardo's fancy-sprighted studies.

After this fashion we gained the spine of mountain which composes Ischia—the smooth ascending ridge that grows up from those eastern waves to what was once the apex of fire-vomiting Inarime, and breaks in precipices westward, a ruin of gulfed lava, tortured by the violence of pent Typhæus. Under a vast umbrella pine we dismounted, rested, and saw Capri. Now the road skirts slanting-wise along the further flank of Epomeo, rising by muddy earth-heaps and sandstone hollows to the quaint pinnacles which build the summit. There is no inconsiderable peril in riding over this broken ground ; for the soil crumbles away, and the ravines open downward, treacherously masked with brushwood.

On Epomeo's topmost cone a chapel dedicated to S. Niccolo da Bari, the Italian patron of seamen, has been hollowed from the rock. Attached to it is the dwelling of two hermits, subterranean, with long dark corridors and windows opening on the western seas. Church and hermitage alike are scooped, with slight expenditure of mason's skill, from solid mountain. The windows are but loopholes, leaning from which the town of Forio is seen, 2,500 feet below ; and the jagged precipices of the menacing Falange toss their contorted horror forth to sea and sky. Through gallery and grotto we wound in twilight under a monk's guidance, and came at length upon the face of the crags above Casamicciola. A few steps upward, cut like a ladder in the stone, brought us to the topmost peak—a slender spire of soft, yellowish tufa. It reminded me (with differences) of the way one climbs the spire at Strasburg, and stands upon that temple's final crocket, with nothing but a lightning conductor to steady swimming senses. Different indeed are the views unrolled beneath the peak of Epomeo and the pinnacle of Strasburg ! Vesuvius, with the broken lines of Procida, Miseno, and Lago Fusaro for foreground ; the sculpturesque beauty of Capri, buttressed in everlasting calm upon the waves ; the Phlegrean plains and champaign of Volturno, stretching between smooth seas and shadowy hills ; the mighty sweep of Naples' bay ; all merged in blue ; aerial, translucent, exquisitely frail. In this ethereal fabric of azure the most real of realities, the most solid of substances, seemed films upon a crystal sphere.

The hermit produced some flasks of amber-coloured wine from his stores in the grotto. These we drank, lying full-length upon the tufa in the morning sunlight. The panorama of sea, sky, and long-drawn lines of coast, breathless, without a ripple or a taint of cloud, spread far and wide around us. Our horses and donkey cropped what little grass, blent with bitter herbage, grew on that barren summit. Their grooms helped us out with the hermit's wine, and turned to sleep face downward. The whole scene was very quiet, islanded in immeasurable air. Then we asked the boy, Giuseppe, whether he could guide us on foot down the cliffs of Monte Epomeo to Casamicciola. This he was willing and able to do; for he told me that he had spent many months each year upon the hill-side, tending goats. When rough weather came, he wrapped himself in a blanket from the snow that falls and melts upon the ledges. In summer time he basked the whole day long, and slept the calm ambrosial nights away. Something of this free life was in the burning eyes, long clustering dark hair, and smooth brown bosom of the faun-like creature. His graceful body had the brusque, unerring movement of the goats he shepherded. Human thought and emotion seemed a-slumber in this youth who had grown one with nature. As I watched his careless incarnate loveliness I remembered lines from an old Italian poem of romance, describing a dweller of the forest, who

Haunteth the woodland aye 'neath verdurous shade,
Eateth wild fruit, drinketh of running stream;
And such-like is his nature, as 'tis said,
That ever weepeth he when clear skies gleam,
Seeing of storms and rain he then hath dread,
And feareth lest the sun's heat fail for him;
But when on high hurl winds and clouds together,
Full glad is he and waiteth for fair weather.

Giuseppe led us down those curious volcanic *balze*, where the soil is soft as marl, with tints splashed on it of pale green and rose and orange, and a faint scent in it of sulphur. They break away into wild chasms, where rivulets begin; and here the narrow watercourses made for us plain going. The turf beneath our feet was starred with cyclamens and wavering anemones. At last we reached the chestnut woods, and so by winding paths descended on the village. Giuseppe told me, as we walked, that in a short time he would be obliged to join the army. He contemplated this duty with a dim and undefined dislike. Nor could I, too, help dreading and misliking it for him. The untamed, gentle creature, who knew so little but his goats as yet, whose nights had been passed from childhood *à la belle étoile*, whose limbs had never been cumbered with broadcloth or belt—for him to be shut up in the barrack of some Lombard city, packed in white conscript's sacking, drilled, taught to read and write, and weighted with the knapsack and the musket! There was something lamentable in the prospect. But such is the burden of man's

life, of modern life especially. United Italy demands of her children that by this discipline they should be brought into that harmony which builds a nation out of diverse elements.

FROM ISCHIA TO NAPLES.

Ischia showed a new aspect on the morning of our departure. A sea-mist passed along the skirts of the island, and rolled in heavy masses round the peaks of Monte Epomeo, slowly condensing into summer clouds, and softening each outline with a pearly haze, through which shone emerald glimpses of young vines and fig-trees.

We left in a boat with four oarsmen for Pozzuoli. For about an hour the breeze carried us well, while Ischia behind grew ever lovelier, soft as velvet, shaped like a gem. The mist had become a great white luminous cloud—not dense and alabastrine, like the clouds of thunder, but filmy, tender, comparable to the atmosphere of Dante's moon. Porpoises and sea-gulls played and fished about our bows, dividing the dark brine in spray. The mountain distances were drowned in bluish vapour—Vesuvius quite invisible. About noon the air grew clearer, and Capri reared her fortalice of sculptured rock, ærially azure, into liquid ether. I know not what effect of atmosphere or light it is that lifts an island from the sea by interposing that thin edge of lustrous white between it and the water. But this phenomenon to-day was perfectly exhibited. Like a mirage on the wilderness, like Fata Morgana's palace ascending from the deep, the pure and noble vision stayed suspense 'twixt heaven and ocean. At the same time the breeze failed, and we rowed slowly between Procida and Capo Miseno—a space in old-world history athrong with Cæsar's navies. When we turned the point, and came in sight of Baiæ, the wind freshened and took us flying into Pozzuoli. The whole of this coast has been spoiled by the recent upheaval of Monte Nuovo with its lava floods and cindery deluges. Nothing remains to justify its fame among the ancient Romans and the Neapolitans of Boccaccio's and Pontano's age. It is quite wrecked, beyond the power even of hendecasyllables to bring again its breath of beauty : *

* These verses are extracted from the second book of Pontano's *Hendecasyllabi* (Aldus, 1513, p. 208). They so vividly paint the amusements of a watering-place in the fifteenth century that I have translated them :

“ With me let but the mind be wise, Gravina,
 With me haste to the tranquil haunts of Baiæ,
 Haunts that pleasure hath made her home, and she who
 Sways all hearts, the voluptuous Aphrodite.
 Here wine rules, and the dance, and games and laughter ;
 Graces reign in a round of mirthful madness ;
 Love hath built, and desire, a palace here too,
 Where glad youths and enamoured girls on all sides
 Play and bathe in the waves in sunny weather,
 Dine and sup, and the merry mirth of banquets

Mecum si sapias, Gravina, mecum
 Baias, et placidos coles recessus,
 Quos ipsæ et veneres colunt, et illa
 Quæ mentes hominum regit voluptas.
 Hic vina et choreæ jocique regnant,
 Regnant et charites facetiæque.
 Has sedes Amor, has colit Cupido.
 His passim juvenes puellulæque
 Ludunt, et tepidis aquis lavantur,
 Cœnantque et dapibus leporibusque
 Miscent delitias venustiores :
 Miscent gaudia et osculationes,
 Atque una sociis toris fœventur,
 Has te ad delitias vocant camœnæ ;
 Invitat mare, myrteumque littus ;
 Invitant volucres canoræ, et ipse
 Gaurus pampineas parat corollas.

At Pozzuoli we dined in the Albergo del Ponte di Caligola (Heaven save the mark !), and drank Falernian wine of modern and indifferent vintage. Then Christian hired two open carriages for Naples. He and I sat in the second. In the first we placed the two ladies of our party. They had a large, fat driver. Just after we had all passed the gate a big fellow rushed up, dragged the corpulent coachman from his box, pulled out a knife, and made a savage thrust at the man's stomach. At the same moment a *guardia-porta*, with drawn cutlass, interposed and struck between the combatants. They were separated. Their respective friends assembled in two jabbering crowds, and the whole party, uttering vociferous objurgations, marched off, as I imagined, to the watch-house. A very shabby lazzarone, without more ado, sprang on the empty box, and we made haste for Naples. Being only anxious to get there, and not at all curious about the squabble which had deprived us of our fat driver, I relapsed into indifference when I found that neither of the men to whose lot we had fallen was desirous of explaining the affair. It was sufficient cause for self-congratulation that no blood had been shed, and that the Procuratore del Rè would not require our evidence.

The Grotta di Posilippo was a sight of wonder, with the afternoon sun slanting on its festoons of creeping plants above the western entrance—the gas lamps, dust, huge carts, oxen, and *contadini* in its subterranean darkness—and then the sudden revelation of the bay and city as we jingled out into the summery air again by Virgil's tomb.

Blend with dearer delights and love's embraces,
 Blend with pleasures of youth and honeyed kisses,
 Till, sport-tired, in the couch inarmed they slumber.
 Thence our Muses invite to these enjoyments ;
 Thence those billows allure, the myrtled seashore,
 Birds allure with a song, and mighty Gaurus
 Twines his redolent wreath of vines and ivy."

NIGHT AT POMPEII.

On to Pompeii in the clear sunset, falling very lightly upon mountains, islands, little ports, and indentations of the bay.

From the railway station we walked above half a mile to the Albergo del Sole under a lucid heaven of aqua-marine colour, with Venus large in it upon the border line between the tints of green and blue.

The Albergo del Sole is worth commemorating. We stepped, without the intervention of courtyard or entrance hall, straight from the little inn garden into an open, vaulted room. This was divided into two compartments by a stout column supporting round arches. Wooden gates furnished a kind of fence between the atrium and what an old Pompeian would have styled the triclinium. For in the further part a table was laid for supper and lighted with suspended lamps. And here a party of artists and students drank and talked and smoked. A great live peacock, half asleep and winking his eyes, sat perched upon a heavy wardrobe watching them. The outer chamber, where we waited in arm-chairs of ample girth, had its *loggia* windows and doors open to the air. There were singing-birds in cages; and plants of rosemary, iris, and arundo sprang carelessly from holes in the floor. A huge vase filled to overflowing with oranges and lemons, the very symbol of generous prodigality, stood in the midst, and several dogs were lounging round. The outer twilight, blending with the dim sheen of the lamps, softened this pretty scene to picturesqueness. Altogether it was a strange and unexpected place. Much experienced as the nineteenth-century nomad may be in inns, he will rarely receive a more powerful and refreshing impression, entering one at evenfall, than here.

There was no room for us in the inn. We were sent, attended by a boy with a lantern, through fields of dew-drenched barley and folded poppies, to a farmhouse overshadowed by four spreading pines. Exceedingly soft and grey, with rose-tinted veils of steam upon its summit, stood Vesuvius above us in the twilight. Something in the recent impression of the dimly lighted supper-room, and in the idyllic simplicity of this lantern-litten journey through the barley, suggested, by one of those inexplicable stirrings of association which affect tired senses, a dim, dreamy thought of Palestine and Bible stories. The feeling of the *cenacolo* blent here with feelings of Ruth's cornfields, and the white square houses with their flat roofs enforced the illusion. Here we slept in the middle of a *contadino* colony. Some of the folk had made way for us; and by the wheezing, coughing, and snoring of several sorts and ages in the chamber next me, I imagine they must have endured considerable crowding. My bed was large enough to have contained a family. Over its head there was a little shrine, hollowed in the thickness of the wall, with several sacred emblems and a shallow vase of holy water. On dressers at each end of the room stood glass shrines, occupied

by finely-dressed Madonna dolls and pots of artificial flowers. Above the doors S. Michael and S. Francis, roughly embossed in low relief and boldly painted, gave dignity and grandeur to the walls. These showed some sense for art in the first builders of the house. But the taste of the inhabitants could not be praised. There were countless gaudy prints of saints, and exactly five pictures of the Bambino, very big and sprawling in a field alone. A crucifix, some old bottles, a gun, old clothes suspended from pegs, pieces of peasant pottery and china, completed the furniture of the apartment.

But what a view it showed when Christian next morning opened the door! From my bed I looked across the red-tiled terrace to the stone pines with their velvet roofage and the blue-peaked hills of Stabia.

SAN GERMANO.

No one need doubt about his quarters in this country town. The Albergo di Pompeii is a truly sumptuous place. Sofas, tables, and chairs in our sitting-room are made of buffalo horns, very cleverly pieced together, but torturing the senses with suggestions of impalement. Sitting or standing, one felt insecure. When would the points run into us? when should we begin to break these incrustations off? and would the whole fabric crumble at a touch into chaotic heaps of horns?

It is market day, and the costumes in the streets are brilliant. The women wear a white petticoat, a blue skirt made straight and tightly bound above it, a white richly-worked bodice, and the white square-folded napkin of the Abruzzi on their heads. Their jacket is of red or green—pure colour. A rug of striped red, blue, yellow, and black protects the whole dress from the rain. There is a very noble quality of green—sappy and gemmy—like some of Titian's or Giorgione's—in the stuffs they use. Their build and carriage are worthy of goddesses.

Rain falls heavily, persistently. We must ride on donkeys, in water-proofs, to Monte Cassino. Mountain and valley, oak wood and ilex grove, lentisk thicket and winding river-bed, are drowned alike in soft-descending, soaking rain. Far and near the landscape swims in rain, and the hillsides send down torrents through their watercourses.

The monastery is a square, dignified building, of vast extent and princely solidity. It has a fine inner court, with sumptuous staircases of slabbed stone leading to the church. This public portion of the edifice is both impressive and magnificent, without sacrifice of religious severity to parade. We acknowledge a successful compromise between the austerity of the order and the grandeur befitting the fame, wealth, prestige, and power of its parent foundation. The church itself is a tolerable structure of the Renaissance—costly marble incrustations and mosaics, meaningless Neapolitan frescoes. One singular episode in the mediocrity of art adorning it is the tomb of Pietro dei Medici. Expelled from Florence in 1494, he never returned, but was drowned in

the Garigliano. Clement VII. ordered, and Duke Cosimo I. erected, this marble monument—the handicraft, in part at least, of Francesco di San Gallo—to their relative. It is singularly stiff, ugly, out of place—at once obtrusive and insignificant.

A gentle old German monk conducted Christian and me over the convent—boys' school, refectory, printing press, lithographic workshop, library, archives. We then returned to the church, from which we passed to visit the most venerable and sacred portion of the monastery. The cell of S. Benedict is being restored and painted in fresco by the Austrian Benedictines; a pious but somewhat frigid process of re-edification. This so-called cell is a many-chambered and very ancient building, with a tower which is now embedded in the massive superstructure of the modern monastery. The German artists adorning it contrive to blend the styles of Giotto, Fra Angelico, Egypt, and Byzance, not without force and a kind of intense frozen pietism. S. Mauro's vision of his master's translation to heaven—the ladder of light issuing between two cypresses, and the angels watching on the tower walls—might even be styled poetical. But the decorative angels on the roof and other places, being adapted from Egyptian art, have a strange, incongruous appearance.

Monasteries are almost invariably disappointing to one who goes in search for what gives virtue and solidity to human life; and even Monte Cassino was no exception. This ought not to be otherwise, seeing what a peculiar sympathy with the monastic institution is required to make these cloisters comprehensible. The atmosphere of operose indolence, prolonged through centuries and centuries, stifles; nor can antiquity and influence impose upon a mind which resents monkery itself as an essential evil. That Monte Cassino supplied the Church with several potentates is incontestable. That medieval learning and morality would have suffered more without this brotherhood cannot be doubted. Yet it is difficult to name men of very eminent genius whom the Cassinesi claim as their alumni; nor, with Boccaccio's testimony to their carelessness, and with the evidence of their library before our eyes, can we rate their services to civilised erudition very highly. I longed to possess the spirit, for one moment, of Montalembert. I longed for what is called historical imagination, for the indiscriminate voracity of those men to whom world-famous sites are in themselves soul-stirring.

J. A. S.

Authors for Hire.

ENGLISH and American authors have lately been much perturbed in their minds as to the question of copyright. I gladly leave the details of the argument to those who can understand legal questions, and who have some personal interest at stake. Listening in the intermittent fashion of an outsider, I have been chiefly impressed by a discussion of general principles which now and then varies the dry technicalities of the general controversy. The question is raised whether an author has or ought to have any right to his works, and suggests much pretty logical fencing as to why anybody should have a right to anything. The use of property, I should say, is the sum of all the evils of communism. We allow a man to have an exclusive right to a thing because infinite mischiefs would result from the abolition of such rights. The first and most obvious mischief is that otherwise there would be a general scramble for good things. If some shadowy sentiment did not guard even my umbrella I could never leave it in the hall of my club. I should have to sit upon it incessantly, and to be ready to take up arms against the first passing bishop whose apron was threatened by a shower of rain. The same principle, of course, applies to my books—that is, to the actual row of volumes on my shelves. Like every proprietor of such objects, I tremble when a literary friend enters my study and I see his eyes wandering towards those humble rarities which I have had the luck to acquire, and which your great collector might think just worth permanent “borrowing.” But if my friend proposed to copy my book, or to have a precisely similar book produced, I should be a dog in the manger of the meanest kind if I had refused to gratify him. By so doing, indeed, he would in some degree diminish the value of my property; but he would increase the quantity of valuable objects in existence. If I am selfish enough to refuse such a proposal, the world at large has no interest in sanctioning my selfishness. If a cheap mode of manufacturing large diamonds were discovered, the proprietors of the Koh-i-noor and other such gems would be so much the poorer. They would lose so much command of their neighbours’ pockets. But their neighbours are not interested in maintaining that state of things which gives them that command. We do not hold that a man is injured by the acquisition of similar property by others so long as his right to use his own property is respected. To do so would be to revert to those outworn economical superstitions which led the Dutch to destroy half their spices to raise the value of the rest. In this respect, there-

fore, there is no ground for copyright, though there is a conclusive reason for upholding a man's right to his own books. Keep your own by all means, whether books or an umbrella, but you shall not forbid other people from making precisely similar books and umbrellas if they can do so without stealing. My Shakspeare or my arm-chair is not intrinsically the worse because thousands and millions of other people have Shakspeares and arm-chairs of the same pattern. On the contrary, I can read and enjoy all the better because I have so many fellow-students, some of whom are far better qualified for enjoying the same study. To justify, therefore, any such right as to limitation of a reproduction of my books, I must invoke some other principle. I am limiting the free action of my fellows, and I must give them some benefit in return. The principle to be invoked is obvious. Property is useful because communism would deprive men of a motive for labour. I till my field that I may reap the harvest; and if I have no right to the harvest I shall not go through the labour. This is a perfectly good, and, so far as it goes, an unanswerable reason for allowing some privilege to the writer of books. So far as books are produced with a view to making money, we must, if we wish to have the books, give the author some means of making the money. The most obvious expedient is to give him a copyright; that is, to allow him to forbid the reproduction, except on his own terms. Such a right must always be limited, for the simple reason that it restricts the enjoyment of other people. If I am to be forbidden to reproduce a Shakspeare I am prevented from what is in itself a harmless and a laudable action in order that I may confer a boon upon Shakspeare and his fellows. I must, therefore, be satisfied that it is a real boon: that Shakspeare's writing is facilitated by the right conferred upon him, and therefore that Shakspeare's writings are worth the cost of the restriction imposed upon us all.

In this sense a copyright comes under the general case of a patent. When Watt invented the steam-engine it was desirable that all who used it should pay him for a time in order that he and other inventors should be encouraged. But no reasonable person would suggest for a moment that Watt and all his representatives should have the right for all time to come to prohibit the use of steam-engines; for such a right would be fatal to the progress of inventions. It would create a mass of rights so complex and elaborate that industry would be strangled. We give, or ought to give, just so much privilege as will stimulate the energy of the inventor without unduly hampering the energies of his successors. The measure of the right is its advantage to society at large, and I fail to see how any other measure can possibly be suggested. Indeed, it is only worth saying explicitly in view of the daring claim sometimes set up by authors to an absolute and indefeasible right in their books. I am, says one, the absolute creator of my book; I have made it, not as a man makes a table, by changing old materials into a new shape, but made it out of nothing. It has come straight from my mind, and therefore to

all time it belongs to me and to nobody else, and in a sense in which no other object can possibly belong to me.

I must, in passing, deny the fact. Nobody was ever original in this sense. Scientific and philosophic discovery is a race. The great discoverer is the man who is a hairbreadth before his fellows; who sees to-day the results which everybody will see to-morrow; and he sees them because he is on the highest step of the ladder, which is always being raised by the labour of his fellows. Newton could not have been Newton without Kepler, nor could Watt have invented the steam-engine if it had not been half invented by numerous predecessors. Why should the man who makes the last decisive step absorb into himself all the merits of his predecessors? This is true even more conspicuously of the philosopher, and it is true even of the poet. He is not strictly a "maker," as we used to be told, but a shaper, of the thoughts and emotions; that is, of the countless obscure. He puts the last touch upon the thought which makes it enduring; but the material is as much provided for him as for the humblest artisan. If, therefore, you choose this high *à priori* road, you have first to solve an insoluble problem. How much has any man really "created"? How much is due to the preparatory labourer, and how much to the final polisher? Anybody may answer such questions who can. Let us grant that they can be answered. We know then what the man has done, and we are desirous to repay him. He is, let us say, a great scientific celebrity. His thought has been a leaven setting up a fermentation in the whole world of speculation. That, and nothing less, is the service which he has done to mankind, and that it is which, on this showing, mankind ought to repay. If so, the thing created is the idea, not the tool; and it is in the idea that he should have a property. Mr. Darwin, for example, should have an exclusive right to the theory of natural selection. Nobody should ever speak of differentiation and integration (I admit the plan has some charms) without paying toll to Mr. Herbert Spencer. But the book in which the idea was first revealed to mankind has but an indirect and accidental relation to this service. Mr. Darwin might have expounded his theories in conversation; he might have delivered them in lectures at a college. The man who first took them up and expounded them in popular shape would derive all the advantage derivable from books, unless you confine the right of propagating ideas as well as the right of printing a particular set of words. You profess to reward a man for his services to thought; but there is not the slightest security that you will reward him adequately, or that you will reward the right man at all.

But is not the very notion of a "reward" absurd? When a new idea has dawned upon a man's mind, it is not a thing to be bought and sold: for it is not his right, but his most sacred duty to reveal it to the world. Doctors have a rule which, whatever its motive, is surely most honourable: the rule that a man who has made some medical discovery is not to make it the base of pecuniary rights. If you wish to pay for

discoveries, there are none which more clearly deserve such payment. The man who invented anæsthetics or vaccination, who abolished a terrible disease and spared incalculable sufferings, deserves all that we could do for him. But it is felt, and rightly felt, that such services are not payable in hard cash. The reward, if reward is sought, must be in the accession of general respect and in the consciousness of a benefit conferred upon our fellow-creatures. The discovery of a new theory in science and philosophy should be regarded in the same light. You cannot pay a man for devoting his life to speculation upon subjects unintelligible to the million, and yet of vital interest to their happiness. The only reward—and surely it is an ample reward—is in the sense that a man has given a perceptible jog to the slow-working brain of this humdrum world. And, equally, if a man can sing a new song for us, and set our weary thoughts to a new tune, he is bound to sing it without asking for pay. When Rouget de l'Isle composed the *Marseillaise*, the service (or disservice) which he rendered was the adding a keener edge to the revolutionary fervour. Who can appraise the value of that service in francs and centimes? Would it not have been ridiculous to pay him by restricting its circulation, when his motive, if he had any worthy motive, was that it should be sung as widely, and penetrate the hearts of his countrymen as deeply, as possible? And is not every poet, after his kind, composing some fresh Marseillaise to inspire the toilsome march of humanity?

We are getting into regions too lofty for the argument? That is the very thing. The question of pay belongs to the lower sphere. Those who wish for restrictions upon the sale of books must not give themselves the airs of men really attempting to reward merit. The commercial question is altogether collateral and subordinate. The great writer, in one sense, deserves no pay at all; for he is only discharging the duty imposed upon him by his genius. Or, if we try to pay him, we can never pay him in due proportion to his merits. The commercial value of a book has no relation to its real value in the world of thought. Books which have altered all our lives have fallen still-born from the press; and contemptible rubbish has often made its author rich. It would be as sensible to reward great writers in this way as to reward statesmen by fees on every Act of Parliament which they got passed in proportion to the number of times it is applied in the courts. If, however, you insist upon treating the question as one of bargain, the retort is easy. I have created this book, you say; therefore it is my property. What do you mean by creating? I mean that, but for me, it would have had no existence. You wrote it then, because you chose? Certainly. Then, if you chose, you could have let it alone? Where is your claim? If we had forced you to write, you would have had some claim upon us. You wrote at your own free will and pleasure, and therefore presumably you accepted our terms. How can it be argued, if it be a question of bargain, that you have an indefeasible right to fix the

terms on which your goods are to be bought? We offer such terms as suit our convenience. They do not suit you. Then your remedy is obvious; do not write. The only answer which you can make is, that we shall be the losers. But this brings us back to our old argument. So far as good books are useful, so far as a concession of the right helps the production of good books, it is expedient that the privilege should be granted; but not one penny or one fraction of a privilege more. The restriction is in itself—that is, in its direct action upon the readers—a disadvantage, like every other restriction upon trade. We should consent to it just so far as the disadvantage is compensated by results. No ingenuity can evade this plain issue. How far are copyrights useful to literature? That is the problem which we must answer fairly, instead of begging the answer; and the simplest way of suggesting the true answer is by observing the facts. Let us summon a few witnesses from the past, and see what they can tell us. Have they been stimulated by such rewards, or failed for want of reward? And let me be pardoned if for the moment I accept the office of devil's advocate; for the other side requires no additional representation. First, let us take note of the distinction which is unfortunately marked by no precise titles. "Shoughs, water-rugs, and demi-wolves," we know are all "cleped by the name of 'dogs'"; and such is the paucity of language that the same word "author" describes at once a Plato or a Shakspeare, and the writer of such an article as this present. The case, indeed, is common. A painter means indifferently either Raphael or the person who stains my walls; a musician may be a Mozart, or the wretch who turns the barrel-organ; and there is hardly a greater distance between the two ends of the scale of authorship. It does not follow that there is anything in the least degree dishonourable about the trade of authorship. It is one which an honest man may exercise without the slightest cause for shame. There is no more intrinsic vileness in being a journalist than in being a house-painter. But we do not invite Sir Frederick Leighton and Mr. Millais to colour the outside of our houses; and we should be making as great a blunder if we forced our men of literary genius to fill the columns of the daily newspapers. Ephemeral articles may be very good things; but they correspond to a manufacture, not to one of the fine arts. A good workman can turn out his daily supply of copy as regularly as an artisan can make bricks or cut out trousers. He must have practice and dexterity; a certain facility for improving the grammar whilst reproducing the sentiments of the great mass of commonplace people; and a quickness in divining the general currents of opinion. Given such talents, any man can be a respectable journalist, and the addition of any dash of genius is often rather an incumbrance than an advantage. True authorship begins just where journalism ends. The essential qualities of the art are just those which are superfluous in the trade. The author, of course, may write articles; nay, he may make his living

by writing articles ; and so he might, if it happened to be convenient, by cutting out trousers. But it would be just as true in one case as in the other, that he was deserting his higher vocation for a radically different occupation. The misfortune is that the line of distinction is not always palpable ; that the art slides into the trade by imperceptible degrees. As Mr. Millais could doubtless paint my house, if he chose, Mr. Tennyson might regularly supply the poet's corner of a country paper. In one case we should lose the *Order of Release and Chill October*, and, in the other, *Maud* and *In Memoriam*. The misfortune is that whereas, in one word, there is a plain external difference recognisable by everybody, the difference on the other requires for its recognition a certain amount of intelligence. Montgomery's *Satan* looked just like *Paradise Lost* to the reader who only considered typographical distinctions. The hasty reader fancies even now that the last slashing leader belongs to the same class of work as Burke's *Letters on a Regicide Peace*, or Junius's letter to the King. Nay, he even loudly proclaims at times that there is no real difference ; and fancies, good easy creature, that the leader could really be read with interest by human beings in the next generation. And, undoubtedly, it must be allowed to him that, here and there, at rare intervals, a real bit of artistic workmanship gets imbedded amidst ephemeral matter ; and that, in these days, even men of true genius are induced to allow true literary work to reach daylight through the channels ordinarily devoted to mere manufacture. It is just this vagueness, this existence of an equivocal borderland between the two regions, which makes the question worth discussing. For when the artist is tempted to become the artisan, we flatter ourselves that we are encouraging literature ; and smile at our wisdom and liberality in tempting the man who might have written for all ages to confine his efforts to the amusement of our breakfast-table. We persuade a Burke to "cut blocks with a razor," and congratulate ourselves in providing Burke with a worthy career. If we confine the name of author to the genuine artist, and give to his humbler brother the inoffensive name of journalist, we may say that the relation between the two extremes is, on the whole, one of incompatibility. So far as a man becomes a journalist, he ceases to be an author, and *vice versa*.

Let us now call our witnesses, and look at one or two broad facts as to their general tendency.

Roughly speaking, we may say that in the seventeenth century scarcely any man could make a living out of literature in England. In the eighteenth many men could make a bare living ; in the nineteenth many can make a very decent income. Can we say that the supply has improved with the demand ? The trade has undoubtedly increased and multiplied beyond calculation. But if we speak of the art, he would be a bold man who should say that there is any improvement at all. Have we now any work to set beside Shakspeare, and Spenser, and Bacon, with their minor stars of the great constellation ? Is the literature of the

present day, setting aside two or three men of genius, who belong rather to the previous than to this generation, to be compared to that of the great epochs? Is it even clearly better than the comparative dead level of the end of the last century? How many of the living writers under sixty will be read a century hence? I will not say—for I do not believe—that literature is really declining, nor maintain, what some people hold, that we may trace here as elsewhere the tendency of democracy to substitute a mass of commonplace respectability for a spare growth of more exalted excellence. The problem is far too complex to be answered in any off-hand formula. But it is at least plain that the finer growths of the literary vineyard are not multiplied in proportion to the pecuniary manuring of the field. It is said, and I suppose truly, that a successful dramatist at the present day could make an income at which the mouths of all the inhabitants of Grub Street would water. Even in the last century, playwriting was by far the most profitable part of the trade to which an author could turn his hand. Have our plays, then, improved since the days when the sole record of the lives of some of the most popular dramatists is due to the extreme difficulty which they experienced in raising a loan of 5*l*.? Plays at the present day have perhaps more literary value than is admitted by the persons who are always declaiming about the decline of the stage. This, however, is at least clear; that, through the seventeenth century the drama represents the highest literary achievements of the first writers of the time; that in the next century, there are only some half-dozen plays which have any claim to be in the first rank of literature; and that in the present century (putting aside plays like the *Cenci* or *Van Artevelde*, not really intended for the stage) there are none. We could hardly apply a more crucial experiment to prove that money-payments cannot secure good literature.

To prove that, we may say, is to burn daylight. What is a great book? How can it be produced? By offering rewards? If anybody thinks so let him go through a course of prize-poems. An ingenious and amiable person proposed some time ago to offer a prize for the best essay upon the origin of evil. He was under the impression that he could get somebody to throw light upon that ancient puzzle by a chance of winning a few hundred pounds. That stimulus would be sufficient to convert mere aspiring youth into a philosopher profounder than Plato, or Leibnitz, or Kant, or Hume; and yet the potential philosopher must be so sluggish that, without the chance of a prize, he would not condescend to solve the doubts which have haunted humanity through all the centuries. The same simple-minded faith in the power of money was humorously expressed by a singularly acute political economist who, after listening to a long metaphysical discussion upon Being (or some such entertaining problem), observed:—"Ah! if there was money to be made out of it, we should have answered these questions in the city long ago." It might have been answered that even these acute persons in the city have not yet succeeded in solving some of the problems which concern

them most nearly, and wrangle as fiercely over theories about the currency as philosophers over the distinction between object and subject. Nay, even in matters touching all our pockets so closely, the chief lights are due to such abstract philosophers as Adam Smith and J. S. Mill, who have thought out the problems mainly for the love of thinking. We have a quaint notion in these days that anything can be achieved by offering prizes and stimulating competition. Some day perhaps we shall offer rewards for the best exhibition of the Christian virtues. Meanwhile our success does not appear to be very encouraging, and, though poetry is more saleable than ever, the crop of rising poets is not remarkable for abundance or quality.

We shall not be surprised if we ask how poets are generated. Milton has given a familiar recipe for the performance; and, though familiar, it is worth remembering. To write a heroic poem, said the last man who has achieved the feat, you must lead a heroic life. Now the man who writes in order to sell, does not, of necessity, lead a heroic life. To produce the article, it is not enough to offer money, but to bring about the conditions favourable to heroes. What they may be, is a question rather too wide for the present occasion. But the saying is true, and true of more than heroic poems. Every great book is the product of a life. It need not be the product of a long life, for youthful work has its special prerogatives. But no book is really great which is not the concentrated essence of the writer's experience; into which he has not put his whole heart and soul, and, therefore, a good deal more than his desire to bring his wares to the best market. The wish for money may occasionally be the key which unlocks the fountain. Johnson wrote *Rasselas* to pay the expenses of his mother's funeral. Had it not been for that necessity we should never have had the book, which, it is true, is very seldom read, but which is better worth reading than most of its author's performances. If *Rasselas* can scarcely be accepted as one of the greatest books, it is at least one of the fullest and most striking expressions of the sentiment "Vanity of Vanities" which has ever come from a powerful mind plunged deep in the horrors of hypochondria. It is charged to the full with the melancholy conviction of the sadness of men's lives, which could only be generated by long and painful experience in a morbid nature, and which creates so often the analogy between Johnson and the great writer who best appreciated his character. Money was here the occasion, though not the efficient cause, of a powerful performance. But of how many other works can this be said? The advocates upon the other side are fond of citing certain famous cases, in which the reward has been scandalously insufficient. They begin, perhaps, with the five pounds for *Paradise Lost*. They dwell upon Wordsworth's long period of obscurity; and prove that, till he had passed the average age of mankind, he got no return in hard cash for the poems which had soothed so many sufferers, and raised so many sunk in passive indifference to loftier conceptions of life and the world in which we live. They

point out that Shelley's writings were a drug in the market, till markets had ceased to have any significance for him. Each of these great men, indeed, like others who might be cited, stood in direct and conscious antagonism to the established poetical creed of his day. And you can no more make literary reformers by improving the wages of men of letters, than you make ecclesiastical reformers by increasing the endowments of the Church. To be a reformer you must have something of the spirit of the martyr, and that is a spirit not to be bought with money. In proportion to the increase of pay is the temptation to please the paymasters, and, therefore, to tickle the fancies of the vulgar. The man who makes money is the man who exactly gauges the taste of his public, and takes good care to aim neither above nor below the standard. Burke tells us that George Grenville hit the House of Commons of his day between wind and water. Burke's own intellectual artillery, as we know, had a way of flying far above the heads of that distinguished assembly. Therefore, Burke was unable at the time to hold the ear of the house as well as his antagonist. It is needless to say what has been the subsequent result.

The theory, you will say, applies only to the Puritans of literature ; to the men with a lofty mission ; to the few who are really in advance of their age and have the self-confidence—the conceit, shall we call it?—or the faith in their own inspiration which is necessary to sustain the spirits through an uphill fight ; who can resist the threats of Alexander the coppersmith and the noisy worshippers of Diana of the Ephesians. But we cannot accept the doctrine which for obvious reasons commended itself to the excellent Wordsworth, that unpopularity was an inseparable concomitant of genius. Most of the very greatest men, in the judgment of their own day, have also been greatest in the judgment of posterity. We have raised our estimate of Shakspeare and of Milton ; we have lowered our estimate of Pope and of Dryden ; but we admit of all, as it was admitted in their own time, that they were in the front rank of their contemporaries. Contemporaries err not in their selection of the best so much as in the comparison between the best of their own and of after times. And even the cases where a great man has to struggle through a long period of neglect supply no reason for refusing them an ultimate reward. Everybody would rejoice in any pecuniary advantages which might come to Wordsworth in his old age, though the prospect of gaining them was not his motive for exertion. If our few great writers are now reaping a larger harvest than would formerly have been possible, we do not grudge a penny of it. Rather, were it possible, we would have every penny turned into a shilling. If our great men have worked for love instead of hire, it would be mean in us to make their unselfishness a pretext for cheating them of their pay.

The reply might be satisfactory if we could, in fact, bestow rewards without offering bribes. But there is the very knot of the difficulty. We are applying a stimulus which, so far as it acts at all, puts a premium

upon the popular, the hasty, the superficial, and the flimsy, at the expense of the thorough and the profound ; which prompts every man to beat his bullion into gold-leaf, to produce his thought before it has had time to ripen, and to repeat, with jaded and flagging spirits, the performance only possible in the first freshness of early inspiration. Once a new school of thought had to sustain itself against universal ridicule by the consciousness of lofty purpose and, to speak the truth, by a mutual admiration which was pardonable as a defence against outside scorn. When all the servile public followed Jeffreys' lead, and thought a horse-laugh the proper commentary upon the *Excursion* or the *Ancient Mariner*, we can pardon Wordsworth and Coleridge for a little excess of reciprocal appreciation. The blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church. At the present day a clique is in danger not from the contempt of the world—for even the ridicule is flattery in disguise—but from the rush of the unworthy into the true fold. The echo drowns the original voice : the innovator must out-paradox his own paradoxes on pain of falling into the rear of his imitators. To be original to-day is to set the fashion of to-morrow, and to find at last that if imitation be the sincerest form of flattery, it is also, in the long run, the bitterest of satire.

A man has a chance of greatness in proportion to his power of resisting these enervating blandishments. To do good work you must stand on your own legs and despise the *claque* of ephemeral critics. Your motto must be something radically different from the desire of popularity or its fruits. Look back, for a moment, though the point be somewhat superfluous, at the great works of a period remote enough to allow us to speak of a permanent reputation. If any of the great men of the last century really worked for pay, were they not fools for their pains ? Who was the greatest British metaphysician of the period ? By common consent it was David Hume. Hume's metaphysical works, as we all know, fell still-born from the press. He became popular not by the works which changed the current of philosophical thought, but by the history which has sunk into neglect by intrinsic superficiality. Even now, the man who would contribute to abstract speculation must resolve before everything, either to be ready to starve, or to have some independent income, or to eschew originality and write popular treatises for candidates in competitive examinations. Who was the profoundest theologian of the same period ? Beyond all doubt it was Butler ; and if Butler, to make a preposterous hypothesis, had had the smallest view to copyrights, would he not have been demented to spend years of patient labour in order to pack his ripest thoughts into a volume which, in readable type, will go comfortably into a waistcoat pocket ? He preached and went far to practise the theory that the best book would be one which should lay down the vital principles and leave it to the reader to work out his arguments. Any bookseller could have told him that the way to make money was to spread a striking paradox over as many pages as possible, and

turn out a work, for example, such as the *Divine Legation*. Who was the greatest poet between Pope and Wordsworth? Probably Gray; and, if so, what are we to think of the elaborate and exquisite workmanship which made his *Elegy* and one or two brief poems a possession for ever to the world, and yet a possession which it required no effort of generosity to treat as a plaything for Walpole's printing-press? Theology and poetry, of a sort, can doubtless be made to pay at the present, but not the kind of theology and of poetry which was the outcome of such labour as that of Butler and Gray. Or, take a couple of books which have more appearance of commercial value. The *Wealth of Nations*, said the most audacious of panegyrists, was the "most important book ever written;" the *Decline and Fall* is admittedly the one great monumental work of history in the language. Both of these works were doubtless pecuniary successes, but both of them were also produced in defiance of pecuniary considerations. If Gibbon had wanted money, he should have put himself up perseveringly for sale in the political market, instead of foolishly resisting the temptation. Some twenty or thirty years of unremitting labour might have been turned to incomparably better account than in the composition of an immortal work. The *Wealth of Nations* was the fruit of ten years' solitary retirement by a man who had every qualification for the trade of authorship, and who might doubtless have made a far better income by giving pleasant lectures in accordance with popular beliefs.

But this, it may be said, is to evade the true issue. Money rewards are doubtless insufficient to stimulate men to labours which no money can repay. They may even tend, in particular cases, to draw men away from such labours. But it is also true that much literature, and that of the highest class, has been produced by men who made literature a business. It is easy to produce a long list. Shakspeare, Dryden, Pope, Fielding, and Scott, to mention no others, wrote for money, and even lived to some extent by writing. To refuse payment would have been to stifle *Hamlet*, and Dryden's *Satires*, and Pope's *Epistles*, and *Tom Jones*, and the *Waverley Novels*. We might add *Robinson Crusoe*, *Tristram Shandy*, the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and the countless masterpieces of the present day. When we come to questions of the might-have-been, there is always a fine field for differences of opinion; and the case is not to be begged by this simple observation. It is true that all these great men made money by writing. It is equally true that one essential condition of their success was that they wrote for their contemporaries. The literary Puritan, the man who stands apart "like a star," is invaluable; but he is not the only, or perhaps even the highest, kind of writer. We want the Scotts and Byrons as well as the Shelleys and Wordsworths; and it is difficult to say whether the man who can gather up into his own thought the strongest contemporary sentiments is not higher than he who heralds the dawn of the approaching creeds. But it is also true that such men have their characteristic weaknesses. It is conspicuously

true of each of these great men—perhaps it is one secret of their power—that in them the more earthly element was developed along with the more spiritual; that they could live in the common atmosphere of ordinary impulse as well as in the loftier sphere which is the permanent dwelling-place of a few exalted spirits. And only unreasoning idolatry could deny that, so far as they condescended to become tradesmen, they contracted certain stains of the market-place.

Of Shakspeare, indeed, no man is permitted to speak freely. He is a superstition; and if anyone would incur martyrdom by depreciatory speeches in regard to him, he must come armed at all points, and not throw out a mere cursory profanity. Happily, we know very little about him, and therefore he may be pressed into the service of any theory. Each of us may write an imaginary biography which will have as good claims for acceptance as that of any German professor of æsthetics. In my private biography of Shakspeare it is clearly recognised that he was a thoroughly good man of business, and, alone amongst the dramatists of the day, made a competence by his occupation. The reasons are fully explained. He made it not as an author but as a manager. He was profoundly sensitive to the danger that his nature might be subdued to what it worked in, like the dyer's hand. He was forced to write down to his public at times. He would do mere journeyman's work and patch up third-rate plays if he thought that he could draw good houses; and he would, even in his best work, write bombast to split the ears of the groundlings, or have Gloucester's eyes pulled out on the stage to treat the eyes of the spectators to a pleasant sensation. But when he had saved a little money and made a satisfactory investment at Stratford, he would resolve to please himself first, yield to a demoniacal possession and write *Othello* or the first acts of *Hamlet*, and tell the mob what he thought of them through the mouth of Coriolanus. Whatever is disgusting, or offensive, or bombastical, is set down to the manager, and the superhuman energy of the nobler passages is credited to Shakspeare himself.

It is easy to find a parallel case—though the case of a man who only resembled Shakspeare in this particular. In Pope, as in Shakspeare, we have the man of genius in alliance with the journalist or day-labourer.

Pope translated Homer to gain an independence. He wrote the *Satires* to please himself. He did one piece of work—the *Iliad* at least—in the spirit of an honest labourer for hire. He turned out his fifty or sixty lines a day as regularly as a good artisan does his regular job in a factory, or as a journalist of to-day does his leading article or his regulated number of pages in a serial story. But he wrote his satires as a labour of love; he polished and repolished; he grudged no pains to give a keener edge to some cutting epigram, or to improve the flow of his rhythm. The *Epistle to Arbuthnot* is the essence of thoughts which have been refined in the crucible: clear bright crystals which have slowly

precipitated from the turbid current of confused meditations, and fused together with the care of a skilled jeweller setting his most precious gems to the best advantage. To turn out such work as this, as to turn out Gray's *Elegy* or the most exquisite of Mr. Tennyson's poems, a man must be independent of any disturbing influence. He must wait patiently for the favourable instant, for the sudden flash of felicitous inspiration, which comes at rare intervals, and cannot be called down by any conscious preparation. His pen acts as the lightning-conductor, not as a pistol ready loaded. It must wait for the right electric conditions before it will generate the shock. Pope was enabled to give himself a fair chance, because he had made money by Homer. But if he had made money in any other way, by speculating in the South Sea or by reviving his father's shop, his permanent service to literature would have been the same. I say nothing against the Homer, except that, like many other bits of work done for money, like Johnson's *Dictionary* or Goldsmith's histories, it does not represent the true Pope—the characteristic and culminating work which entitles him to a permanent place in literature proper. I do not say that Shakspeare's worst plays and Pope's most mechanical inspiration may not be worth having. I only say that, in both cases, the line between the inspired work and the mere journeyman's labour is distinctly drawn, and that we might lose the last without losing anything that makes the former, in the cant phrase of to-day, really "precious" to lowly human beings.

There are cases in which the division is less deeply marked. Take Dryden, for example. His latest biographer, Mr. Saintsbury, who has criticised him with most appreciative sympathy, has told us, I think, one great secret of his success and of his failures. Dryden, he says, was pre-eminently a man susceptible to the spirit of his time. He is the most accomplished mouthpiece of the sentiments characteristic of a certain social phase; the very type, therefore, of the literary class, which speaks not for the vanguard but for the main body of his contemporaries. He has the faults as well as the merits of his character. He is always a consummate craftsman; a master—as Mr. Saintsbury has emphatically shown and as every one has felt—of English versification; masculine, vigorous, and never failing in sustained and stately eloquence which extorts, when it does not invite, respect. But then it is also true that as he is distinctively and pre-eminently a man of the world—I do not use the phrase in its worst sense—so a very large proportion of his writing is worldly, and, as worldly, corruptible. What one misses is just that higher tone which marks the unworldly—the Milton or the Wordsworth. The coursers attributed to him by Gray have doubtless

Their necks with thunder clothed, and long resounding pace,

and may bear him "through the fields of glory," but they never fairly lift him to the empyrean. And this, in spite of all his technical merits and splendid force of mind, is the reason why decay has bitten so deeply

into his work. For what is Dryden now? I do not mean what is he to thorough students who read partly for knowledge, but to those who read simply for love. Briefly he is *Alexander's Ode* and *Absalom and Achitophel*. We are forced to admire his best plays, such as *All for Love*, but we are not charmed by it. It is a splendid attempt to rival Shakespeare on his own ground; but it fails, so far as it fails, because the intense glow of human passion which animates the *Antony and Cleopatra* is blended in *All for Love* with the unreal romanticism which suited the court of Charles II. The *Fables*, admirable as they are, have the same taint. They are too often of the earth, earthy. They want the fresh humour of his originals, and the sentiment is always dashed with lower elements. The critic may praise, but the simple reader feels the atmosphere to be heavy. Where Dryden succeeds, and succeeds beyond all cavil, is in those unrivalled political satires, where the shrewd judgment of a large-brained man of the world wants no reinforcement from higher poetical elements. He has not to affect a strut of unreal sentiment, but goes straight to the mark like a magnificent gladiator aiming at once at the heart of his antagonist. He judges of men like a man, not like a spiteful partisan, with his petty code of political dogmas, nor from that lofty point of view which too often goes along with an incapacity for estimating character and leads to mere arrogant oneness. He has found his true vocation, and labours in it with a practised force of hand which is inimitable. That the satires were partly prompted by lower motives is likely enough. That they give the full impress of the true man is palpable and undeniable.

It is hard to say how far the lower and the higher aim might be blended in any of Dryden's impulses. Critics may still dispute as to the genuineness of his conversion, though we may safely reject Macaulay's summary theory, that he was simply a venal hypocrite. He was too much of a thinker not to feel the need and to be equal to the task of persuading himself of his own sincerity. But in any case he was, speaking generally, a striking example of the really great poet who is yet specially sensitive to the lower impulses. He could write mere ribaldry to tickle the fancy of his inferiors, and, though never wanting in a certain magnanimity, he could never soar above the world nor even above the less noble part of the world of his time, and just so far as he had to write for money most unequivocally, he wrote those plays which have sunk as a whole into the limbo of far more worthless productions; whilst just so far as we see the true man in the satires, which might at least have been written from his personal interest in his time, and without any hint from his bookseller or his patrons, he achieved the work which can never be forgotten. If Dryden had been forced into making a living by some other occupation, we should have wanted—what few of us would miss—the long list of barely readable plays; but his hands might have been all the freer for his undying satires. At least, the need of temporary success pinned him down to the labour

in which he was weakest till he was fifty; and it was not till an age when most poets have exhausted their pen, that he at last became conscious of his most precious gifts.

Dryden's work marks the period at which the journalist is just beginning to emerge. In the next generation, he appears in full-blown vigour. But in those palmy days of Queen Anne, long regretted by the hapless scribes of Grub Street, the distinction between journalist and author was fully recognised. Swift, though he valued money as every shrewd man values it who has known the evils of poverty, despised writing for money to the end as heartily as Byron began by despising it. He gave his copyrights to his friends and his publishers without a thought of personal profits. Doubtless his contemporaries did not always share this worldly indifference. They were quite capable of having an eye to a splendid subscription list or to the proceeds of the author's night at the playhouse. The excellent Steele was not the man to turn up his nose at little emoluments which might evade the necessity of another draught upon Addison's pocket. Even the exemplary Addison was paid for his *Spectators*, and profited, we may presume, by the success of *Cato*. But his work was done to please himself or to glorify his party, not as a matter of business. Literary reputation was considered as a title to a share in the good things of the time, but literary performances were not supposed to be obtainable for hire.

The gentleman author, who was ready enough to accept some little acknowledgment of his merits in the shape of a place in the Custom-house or upon the list of Irish pensions, looked down with scorn, cruel and unworthy perhaps in many cases, upon the poor garreteer who toiled in the service of Tonson or Curll. He recognised in theory the indelible distinction between the bread-making business and what he would have called the service of the Muses. By degrees, the system changed. Respectable authors began to emerge from the dismal shades of Grub Street. Defoe produced *Robinson Crusoe* as a matter of business, and we may be willing to accept it even at the price of the miserable degradation, the selling of body and soul to the practical dealers in such wares, by which poor Defoe had to keep body and soul together. And in the next generation we have to reckon among journalists such men as Fielding, and Goldsmith, and Johnson, who though genuine inhabitants of the author's purgatory on earth, produced the literary monuments of the time. Yet it is equally true that, in all these cases, the author by profession, as he began to be called, was the worst enemy of the author by divine right. Poor Fielding's works are half filled by a long list of hack performances; and I will not ask how many of my readers are familiar with the *Temple-bearer*, or the *Wedding Day*, or even with *Pasquin* and the *Historical Register*. The *Life and Death of Tom the Thumb the Great* alone retains some kind of suspended animation amongst the early labours of one of our very greatest and most masculine intellects. The works which now mean Fielding were written when he had painfully, and under sore stress of

manifold encumbrances, wriggled himself out of Grub Street so far at least as to have something to fall back upon, and was so far in the position of Pope and Shakspeare. If Goldsmith's exquisite sensibility adorned everything that it touched, who must not regret that so much was wasted in mere journeyman's labours, and is it not fair to draw the inference that he might have done as much or more, had he not been forced to exhaust his admirable powers in writing for booksellers, instead of some other honest trade which would have enabled him to compose master-pieces as a relief from work not at the rare intervals when spirits jaded by daily labour of a superficially similar kind might revive, enough to supply a spontaneous spring of activity? Johnson is the author of the famous sentence, that no one but a fool ever wrote except for money. But Johnson's history contradicts his theory, though he knew it not. For what is Johnson's great work? The *Dictionary*, I admit, is pleasant reading: but it is hardly literature. *Rasselas*, I have said, is impressive, but it is undeniably heavy. But the *Lives of the Poets* is undoubtedly a book of enduring claim to any one who can appreciate the ripe talk of a grand old literary craftsman, talking at his ease, as he talked in the parlour at Streatham, and dealing out his shrewd sense from a position of acknowledged superiority without bothering himself to court the tastes of an audience already conquered, or to drive bargains with booksellers.

The remedy popular with authors is simple. Defoe and Fielding, and Johnson and Goldsmith, should have been better paid; and then they would have been able to do better work. That depends upon the kind of work for which they would have received better pay. If that money was to be made by mere journalism, the three first at least were just the men to have been content with getting daily bread for ephemeral labours. But the answer may be given more confidently because the experiment has been tried. The present century introduced the golden era of magnificent rewards to writers. Has it produced better work, or has the best work won the highest prizes? The literary historian of the nineteenth century will clearly have to take notice not only of such men as Wordsworth and Shelley, but of such masters of style as Coleridge, Lamb, Hazlitt, De Quincey, and Landor. Landor must have starved or given up his special excellence, if he had been forced to live by literature. De Quincey's magnificent style becomes a lifeless encumbrance just so far as he descends to the functions of the journalist. Lamb and Hazlitt were appreciated by little coteries; but Lamb's best work was assuredly that which served to amuse the intervals of his official labour, and Hazlitt, from the very fact that he had to write for money, remains fragmentary and unsatisfactory. The history of Coleridge is too exceptional to be of much value as a precedent; but at least it is plain that if ever he had contrived to explain his distinction between the reason and the understanding the effect would not have been a good pecuniary speculation. His marvellous poetry was worthless in a bookseller's sense, if put beside

the tinsel and glitter of Tom Moore. Did the pecuniary rewards of literature encourage any one of these men to bestow benefits upon mankind? Was not the temptation, so far as it existed, a temptation to desert her true function? Southey was, perhaps, the most genuine man of letters of his day; and it may fairly be said in his case that whatever motives led to the composition of the *Life of Wesley*, at least led to an admirable literary performance. Further, it may be urged, that if Southey had been freer to follow his own impulses, he would have simply added to the mass of sham epic-poetry. And yet nobody can read Southey without feeling that here too we have a case of literary degradation—one more example of the man of exquisite taste turned into a mere day-labourer. Southey's *Doctor*, the pet plaything of his leisure hours, can hardly be called a success; the humour is apt to be laboured, and his spirits too often flag. And yet, I think, that in reading it, we are apt to think that this is what he could really have done excellently if he could have made his bread by mere honest mechanical occupation instead of exhausting his last intellectual energies in grinding out articles for the *Quarterly Review*. He confirms the truth of the common remark that in literature, alone of all employments, the amateur is the superior of the professional; and the obvious reason is, that in literature the amateur is the only true professional. It is he alone who aims at quality instead of quantity; who thoroughly and systematically elaborates what he has to say instead of turning out crude guesses and half-digested fancies to take their chance in the world.

But we must give one glance in conclusion at the men who have made both fame and money. There are cases in which great rewards have come to great men, and the moral which they inculcate is so obvious that one is half ashamed of calling attention to it again. The chief writers who have drawn the great prizes of literature in this century are Scott, Macaulay, and Dickens. The conspicuous fact about Macaulay is precisely this, that literature was never his main occupation till the last years of his life. He was primarily a politician and a legislator, and a very large part of the enduring merit of his work is due to the fact that it is the work of a man whose interest in history was primarily that of a maker of history. The *Essays*, which are his best achievement, were a mere by-play and pleasant occupation for leisure, and not the main business of his life or the labour to which he looked for support. If we come to Scott and Dickens, the moral is as clear as it is painful. For Scott I profess the profoundest reverence. His greatest works seem to me to deserve even higher praise than they have yet received. The magnificent series of novels from *Waverley* to *Ivanhoe* is, as I think, about the best piece of work ever done in the same space of time. But who can speak of Scott without painful thoughts about the luckless ambition typified by *Abbotsford*, and the ill-omened combination of the author and the speculator? When Byron ridiculed Scott for his half-a-crown a line, Scott answered manfully and honestly that he was

not ashamed of turning an honest penny by his labour; but we can see only too well that the satirist had aimed at a weaker place than he knew. Of Dickens I will only say this: that to my mind the most melancholy record of any author's life that I know is the last volume of Forster's *Life*, in which we see how a man of fine genius may be worn to death by vulgar admiration and the intoxication of pecuniary success. It is bad enough that authors should be starved or forced to uncongenial labour, or have to toil through tenfold gloom of despondency and dyspepsia in forcing their way to the front; but it is perhaps still worse for them, and certainly worse for their lasting reputation, that they should start with splendid successes, and be stimulated by the shouts of the multitude to go on making more and more splendid successes, till they have exhausted themselves in spasmodic grasping at cheap triumphs.

But enough of this; for we are in danger of some very commonplace morality. What is the conclusion from it all? That authors should not be paid at all, or rather paid only in gratitude? To that there is at least one fatal objection. If authorship became less profitable than it is, the temptations to journalism would be all the stronger. Men must always be paid for ephemeral work, and this mode of making a living must always be open to men capable of better things. If we did not allow a Scott to have a copyright he would simply be forced to write *feuilletons* for the daily papers. And this is a sufficient defence of copyrights. We cannot possibly make it worth a man's while to do his very best—to write immortal poems or revolutionise the world of thought. By the very act of offering a money reward, we are appealing to the wrong motives. But we may take some measures to diminish the sacrifice which must in all cases be made. We may, by a liberal rule, enable the man to hope that in his old age, or after his death, he and his children may have the loss in some degree made up to them. It would perhaps be better if the whole system could be altered, but it is not yet of pressing importance to inquire what will be the practice in the millennium. And, therefore, as I freely admit, this argument has next to no bearing upon any practical question. It is simply a protest against one incidental assumption, which is often made as a matter of course, and which is yet, I think, degrading to literature. Anything has a tendency to improve the literature of a nation which makes the whole national life richer in interests, more harmonious, and more energetic. The intellectual activity due to widening of the range of thought, the closer sympathies and heightened emotions which mean that new creeds are dawning in men's minds and stirring their imaginations, will bear fruit in literature as elsewhere; and the honour paid by a healthy race to its natural leaders will in one way or other provide sufficient motives for the higher kinds of ambition. But the existence of a liberal system of money rewards for those who can but amuse our idle hours or tickle us with new sensations, is a matter of very subordinate importance. The rewards no doubt are given in one sense to merit; for the public is a paymaster

which does not and cannot take mere private motives into account. But neither can it consider the intrinsic value of the service rendered ; and, therefore, the rewards are almost as often paid for an abdication as for a discharge of a man's highest duty. At best, they are not proportioned to merit, though they may reward merit incidentally. And, therefore, I fancy that men of letters would best consider their own dignity, if they treated the whole question as simply a matter of business and practical convenience. Their claims, so far as they are well founded, belong to a different sphere, and are such as cannot be recognised by hard cash. To be as free as possible from such considerations is a condition of their retaining true self-respect. They should have pride enough to claim to be something more than higglers in the literary market. If honest gains come their way they need not be disdainful ; but they cannot profess to work for hire without abandoning their true position, and they may as well take it for granted at once that they must generally make the choice between aiming at pay and aiming at real excellence. No ingenuity will make the two motives universally coincident.

The Romance of a Wayside Weed.

You will not find many pleasanter or breezier walks in England than this open stretch of Claverton Down: certainly you will find very few with more varied interest of every conceivable sort for every cultivated mind. The air is fresh and laden from the brine of the Atlantic and the Gulf Stream; the clear wind is blowing straight from seaward, not keen and dry from the eastern plains, but soft and pure from a thousand leagues of uninterrupted ocean; and the view over the broken dale of Avon, where it cuts its way in a veritable gorge through the high barrier of the Bath oolite, stretches for miles over one of the loveliest and greenest valleys in all our lovely green England. More than that—the whole history of Britain is visibly unfolded here before my very eyes. That bald roundish hill to the right, with its smooth summit artificially levelled, and its sides planed down into a long glacis, is Little Solisbury; and Little Solisbury, as its name clearly shows, is the very oldest Bath of all. For it is the bury or hill-fort of Solis, the ancient fortified town of the Keltic and Euskarian natives; and when, long ages afterwards, the Romans planted their station in the valley below, they naturally called the hot springs which they found there by the name of *Aquæ Solis*; and equally naturally misinterpreted the second word (really a native term) as the genitive of *Sol*, and accordingly dedicated their great temple on the spot to *Apollo*. Those straight white lines and green-grown ridges on the flanks of Banagh Down and the eastern heights are the vestiges of the old Roman causeways—the *Fosse* and its branches—now totally disused or else degraded into modern cart-roads; and the Institution Buildings in the valley below cover or contain all the remaining memorials of the stately Roman town. Back of me again, on Hampton Down, stand the earthworks of *Caer Badon*, the later British village, planted there when fear of the heathen West Saxon invaders had driven back the Christian Welshman to the hills which he had deserted for the fruitful valley during the security of the *Pax Romana*; and this long mound on whose summit I am standing to catch the view, actually forms part of *Wansdyke*, the great boundary barrier behind which the Welshmen of the Somersetshire principality entrenched themselves, after the pagan English pirates had taken possession of the Avon dale and of Bath itself. The decisive battle which settled the fate of the city was fought at *Dyrham Park*, among those blue downs on the northern horizon; and the tiny village of *Englishcombe*, nestling below the solitary beacon of *High Barrow Hill* on my left, marks in its very name the furthest westward extension of the Teutonic settlers towards the

ever unconquered recesses of Mendip. As to later associations, they are too endless for review. In the foreground lies the town, and from its midst towers the abbey, that last flickering effort of English architecture before the Reformation choked out its life for ever; a tall and stately but very cold specimen of good late perpendicular work. It rises above the ancient temple of Minerva, and covers fragments of the older minsters—that which Osric, king of the Worcester men, gave to a nunnery in 671; that which Offa of Mercia raised in 775; that where Eadgar, first king of all England, was crowned in 973; and that which the Angevin John of Tours erected in 1160. There to the right is Lansdown, where the Parliament's men under Waller all but wiped out the stout Cornishmen who "stood up for their king" under Sir Bevil Grenville in a fruitless victory; and the big tower on the top is Beckford's Folly, built in a fit of Oriental recklessness by "Vathek" Beckford, and now the landmark of the cemetery which spreads over his vanished domain. In the combe to the left, again, that huge pseudo-classical manor-house is Prior Park, the vast rambling home of Ralph Allen; and Ralph Allen was the original of Squire Allworthy, whose grounds, as minutely described in *Tom Jones*, are here actually realised. But if I went on talking all day I should never have finished; for the history of the Bath valley, as seen from Claverton Down, is, as I said before, the history of all England, visibly epitomised in tangible realities before one's very eyes.

However, I have not come out to-day to hunt for old relics among the works of Caer Badon, or to trace the curious bends and angles of Wansdyke. A far older and stranger chapter of our history than any of these is unfolded by the little wayside weed which I have here in my botanical case; and it was to find this very commonplace and uninteresting-looking plant that I have come out this morning. For the weed is the hairy wood-spurge, and Claverton Down is the only place in Great Britain where that particular kind of spurge still lingers on. I have got my British Flora safe here in my satchel; and now I am going to sit down on the slope of Wansdyke and make quite sure that my plant really tallies exactly with Dr. Bentham's description; and if it actually does, then I shall have the pleasure of knowing that I hold in my hand one of the few genuine links which yet unite us with a very distant past—a past compared with which the days when Wansdyke was built, or even when Little Solisbury was fortified, seem comparatively recent. For if this is in fact the hairy wood-spurge, it and its ancestors have been growing here on Claverton Down ever since the end of the last glacial epoch; and it is a relic of the flora which once bloomed among the lowlands that connected England and Ireland with Brittany, Spain, and the Pyrenees. It dates back, in short, to the time when Britain was still an integral part of the European continent.

A few minutes' examination with my pocket-lens is quite enough to assure me that the flower I have picked is truly the wood-spurge of

which I am in search. It is a queer, insignificant little plant, with funny cup-like green flowers, and odd jelly-bag glands, very much like most other English spurges; but I see at once on a closer examination that it has all the distinguishing marks of the hairy species—the woolly under-side to the leaves, the dotted seed-capsules, the loose umbels of blossom, and the long branched rays supporting the straggling flower-heads. I regard it, therefore, as a decided find; for the lane that bounds the Prior Park estate, and this bit of woodland on the summit of Claverton Down, are the only spots in England where this particular plant is now found. But that is not all. In itself, the fact of its rarity would not be enough to arouse any special interest; for there are many other wild flowers found in only one spot in Britain—sometimes garden kind escaped from cultivation in a suitable climate, sometimes American straylings, and sometimes high Alpine species requiring a particular granite, basalt, or limestone soil—a soil perhaps to be met with in our islands only on one or two scattered Welsh or Scottish hills of the requisite height. The case of the hairy spurge, however, is very different from any of these. It is a Southern European and Western Asiatic plant, and it spreads along the Mediterranean basin from the Caucasus to the Pyrenees; but it nowhere comes any nearer to Britain than the valley of the Loire. This is what gives it such a special interest in my eyes. It is not found in Brittany, it is not found in Normandy, it is not found on the opposite coast of Picardy, it is not found in Kent or Essex; but it suddenly reappears here, out of all reckoning, on Claverton Down.

If the case of the wood-spurge were a solitary one, it would be easy enough to give a ready explanation. The neighbourhood of Bath is known to be one of the warmest spots in England, having, in fact, its own hot water supply always laid on. This is a plant of warm countries. A bird, let us say, once brought over a single seed, clinging to its feet or feathers; an exotic flower, imported for the shrubberies of Prior Park, was packed in earth containing young spurges; a sailor introduced it by some chance; a botanist sowed it here for an experiment. Nay, perhaps a Roman settler at Aquæ Solis brought it over with the plants for his garden. In such or the like casual manner it got a footing on Claverton Down; and, as the climate suited it, it has gone on flourishing ever since. Here, I say, would be an easy explanation if the case of the hairy spurge were a solitary one; but, as a matter of fact, there are hundreds of cases exactly like it. It is quite a common occurrence to find a plant extend all through Europe from the Caucasus to the Pyrenees, then stop suddenly short, and turn up again once more incontinently in Devon, Cornwall, Kerry, and Connemara. This is such a curious fact that it really seems to call for some adequate explanation.

Let me begin by noting a few of the most striking instances. There is in the Bristol Channel a solitary rocky islet known by the old Scandinavian title of the Steep Holme—a name given to it, no doubt, by the wickings of the ninth century, who made it their headquarters for

plundering the chapmen and slavemongers of Brigstow. Now the rocky clefts of the Steep Holme are still crimson in May and June with the brilliant red blossoms of the wild pæony, a flower which does not elsewhere appear nearer to England than the Pyrenees. Some months since, when I had the pleasure of personally conducting the readers of the CORNHILL on a philological tour through the Lyme Regis district, we stopped for a few minutes at the pretty little village of Kilminster, near Axminster. Well, Kilminster Common is a place famous to botanists, because it is the one single station in Britain for a small purplish lobelia, which ranges elsewhere only from Andalusia to central France. Dozens of like cases may be noted in the south-western peninsula of England and the similarly situated corner of Wales about Pembrokeshire. Thus, to lump a long list briefly, the common blue monkshood is found wild in South Wales and the Cornish district only; the yellow draba is confined to old walls about Pennard Castle, near Swansea; the spotted rock-cistus occurs only in the Channel Islands and at Holyhead; the white rock-cistus is peculiar in Britain to Brent Downs in Somerset, together with Torquay and Babbicombe in Devon; the Cheddar pink, a volcanic plant of southern Europe, clings to the crannies of the Cheddar cliffs near Wells, and to no other crag in England; the soapwort is wild only in Cornwall and Devon; the flax-leaved St. John's wort grows nowhere but at Cape Cornwall and on the banks of the Teign; the crimson clover and Boccone's clover are entirely restricted to the peninsula of the Lizard; so also is the upright clover, save that it is likewise found in the Channel Islands; the sand bird's foot remains only at Scilly; the Bithynian vetch extends through Europe as far north as Bordeaux, and then disappears again till after a sudden leap it is gathered once more in Devon and Cornwall; the white sedum occurs in the Malvern hills and in Somersetshire; and the narrow buplever flowers only at Torquay and in Jersey and Guernsey. In almost all, if not in all, these cases the plant is a southern one, which extends usually from the Caspian to Spain, is perhaps found as far north as the Gironde or even the Loire, and then disappears again till it turns up suddenly in some exceptionally sheltered nook of Devon, Cornwall, or South Wales. This is a phenomenon which cannot surely be due to chance alone. Indeed, I might greatly increase the list, but I refrain only because I am afraid of being wearisome.

When we turn to the similarly placed south-western corner of Ireland, the peculiarities we meet with are even more remarkable. I shall never forget my surprise when once, after my first visit to Nice and Mentone, I began describing the beautiful Provençal flowers to an Irish botanist, and was quietly answered, "Ah, yes: we have them all at Killarney." But it is really true none the less. The thick-leaved sedum, after skipping all England and Wales, shows itself suddenly in the Cove of Cork. The pretty Mediterranean heath, which every winterer on the Riviera has gathered by handfuls on the hills about Cannes and Hyères, jumps at a

bound to the coast of Kerry. The arbutus, with its clustering white blossoms and beautiful red berries, is similarly found in Provence and again at Glengariff. London Pride grows wild in Portugal, western Spain, and the higher Pyrenees, and reappears in south-western Ireland. Another pretty little saxifrage jumps in like manner from the Asturias to Killarney. St. Dabeoc's heath has the same range. The spiked orchid takes a great bound from Bordeaux to a single station in County Galway. To sum it up shortly, "Crete, Auvergne, the Pyrenees, S.-W. Ireland," is a common technical description of the distribution of many south European plants.

Now, these peculiarities of distribution lead me up pretty surely to the romance of the hairy wood-spurge. They show that it did not get here by accident. Like the elephant-headed god of the Mexicans, like the debased traces of Buddhism in the Aztec religion, they raise an immediate curiosity as to their origin. What we may call the natural range of British plants is of this sort: they have entered the country from the Continent, *viâ* Kent, Sussex, East Anglia, or Scotland; and they fall for the most part under three great divisions. The first division consists of central European plants, which seem as if they had come in from the east: and of these a few get no further than the eastern counties; a great many spread over the whole country; and the remainder have reached to the west and to Ireland. The second division is that of the Scandinavian plants, which seem as if they had come in from the north; and of these a few stop short in Shetland, Orkney, or the Highlands; others get as far as the midland counties; and a good many straggle on into Kent or Cornwall. The third division comprises the mountain plants, which have come in from various quarters, and which grow wherever the elevation and the mountain air suit their constitutions. But my wood-spurge agrees with none of these, and it clearly belongs to another southern class, which cannot have entered Britain by any of the customary routes *viâ* Dover, Harwich, or Southampton. It seems to have taken a route of its own, and to have attacked England by way of Bristol and Bordeaux. Otherwise, we should find it and the other peculiar west-country species in the warmer parts of Kent, Surrey, and the Isle of Wight, which, as a matter of fact, we never do. If climate were the only agent at work, Ventnor certainly has as good claims as any place in England.

Perhaps it seems a useless question to inquire how they came there at all. "Were they not always there?" somebody may ask me. And the answer is, No, undoubtedly not. You might as well explain the presence of an English-speaking colony on Pitcairn Island by the hypothesis that Englishmen were originally created in two separate centres—Great Britain and the South Pacific. Only some 80,000 years since—a mere single swing of the cosmical pendulum—every inch of Great Britain and Ireland, save only an insignificant southern fringe, was wholly covered by the ice of the last glacial period. We know the date with mathe-

matical certainty, because the astronomical conditions upon which glacial periods have been shown almost beyond doubt to depend, began 200,000 years ago, and ended 80,000 years ago. During the interval between those two dates, the condition of each hemisphere alternated between long cold periods and long hot periods, of some 10,500 years each. During the last cold spell, all England and Ireland were in the condition of Greenland at the present day. The ice had planed every living thing clean off the face of the country, and we may still trace its scratches on the smooth granite bosses of Wales and Scotland, or find its till and its moraines on the plains and valleys of East Anglia and Derbyshire. Consequently the ancestors of every plant and every animal now living in Britain must have come into it after the end of the last long cold spell—that is to say, roughly speaking, some 80,000 years since.

Moreover, when Britain was repopled after the great ice age, it must have been united to the Continent somewhere, or else it could not possibly possess the large number of European plants and animals which it actually contains.* Had it then been an island, it might have had a considerable population of ferns and small-seeded flowers, of birds and winged insects, blown over to it from the shores of France or Holland; it might even have had a fair sprinkling of snails and lizards, or a few small quadrupeds, wafted across on logs of wood, or carried over accidentally by various chances; but it would be quite impossible that it should have all the species of large or middle-sized wild mammals which we see now inhabiting it—the red deer, the fallow deer, the otter, the badger, the fox, the hare, the rabbit, the weasel, the stoat, the marten, the hedgehog, the wild cat, the mole, the shrew, the squirrel, and the water-vole. Altogether, we have still no less than forty species of British mammals; while the bear, the wild boar, the beaver, the reindeer, and the wolf have become extinct within the historical period; and the wild white cattle even now survive sparingly in Chillingham Park and a few other scattered places. Clearly, as none of these animals or their ancestors can have been in Britain 80,000 years ago, they must have come into Britain at some later date, across a wide bridge of solid land. For Mr. Wallace has conclusively shown that islands which have never formed part of a mainland never have any terrestrial mammals at all; and that a very narrow strait is quite sufficient to prevent the passage of mammals from one island to another. The sound which divides the Indo-Malayan region from the Australian region is hardly wider than that which separates England from France; yet not one single Australian mammal has ever reached the Indo-Malayan region, and not one single Indian mammal has ever reached Australia. The kangaroos, wombats, phalangers, and cassowaries of the one district are quite distinct in type from the elephants, tapirs, tigers,

* I owe my acknowledgments in much that follows to Mr. A. R. Wallace's admirable work on *Island Life*.

deer, and monkeys of the other. So that our numerous existing English fauna must certainly have crossed over on dry land.

We may take it for granted, then, that the mass of British plants came in, as the animals came in, from the east and south-east, immediately after the ice of the glacial epoch had passed away. For the ice had driven man and beast, herb and tree, southward before it; and even if there was a little fringe of what is now Southern Britain not wholly glaciated, yet its condition must have been like that of the little habitable fringe in Greenland, and its plants and animals (if any) must have been of thoroughly Arctic types. But as the glaciers cleared away again, with the return of the sun to the northern hemisphere after its long cold cycle, the southern and eastern plants and animals must have followed the retreating ice-sheet from year to year; till at last the species which used to inhabit Kent and the Isle of Wight found their permanent home in Lapland, and those which used to inhabit Greece and Italy found their permanent home in Holland, Denmark, and Great Britain.

This sufficiently accounts for the presence in England and Scotland of the central European and Scandinavian elements; but it does not account for the presence of my hairy spurge and of all the other south-western species, belonging to the Pyrenean and Italian region. Clearly, the ordinary plants of Eastern England are plants which once spread uninterruptedly from Warwickshire to Central Europe, when the belt of land over the German Ocean was still entire; and clearly, too, the ordinary plants of the North and of Scotland are plants which once spread uninterruptedly from Yorkshire to Scandinavia, during the same period; while both classes have been afterwards isolated in Britain by the gradual subsidence of the intervening land. But this still leaves unanswered the question, Whence did we get the Pyrenean types?

Perhaps one might be disposed at first sight to fancy that they came over separately, as we know a few American plants have really done. There is the well-known Canadian canal weed, which was introduced by a botanist into a tank near Cambridge in 1845, and rapidly spread over all England; there are a few orchids and other wild flowers which have apparently been carried across the Atlantic on the feet of birds; and there are some half-dozen escaped garden flowers, like the evening primrose, which have established themselves easily in our congenial climate. Possibly it might seem as though the arbutus, the hairy spurge, the Mediterranean heath, and all the rest of the southern species in South-Western England or Ireland had got across to us in somewhat the same fragmentary fashion, and had succeeded in effecting a foothold only in these warmer Cornish and Irish nooks. But there are a great many reasons against believing this. In the first place, we have the immense number to account for—at least ninety species, all told; which is a prodigious item to set down to the chapter of accidents. For the distance from Bordeaux to Kerry is really 700 miles, while the distance from Portugal to the Azores (which are peopled with plants and animals in the most

fragmentary manner) is only 900 ; and we can hardly suppose that so large a number of southern plants could permanently establish themselves (against the prevailing winds) in a country already occupied by a flourishing native flora. But two more fatal objections are these : First, our southern plants are only found in the extreme south-west, and not in the warmest parts of the Isle of Wight, of Kent, or of Hampshire. Even at Bournemouth and Ventnor we meet with none of them. And secondly, they are all evidently dying out ; they represent an old flora which is no longer adapted to the country, not a new flora pushing its way vigorously into regions occupied by less congenial plants. Every year they are disappearing before our very eyes, and many of them are from time to time now being expunged from our floras. The Kilmington lobelia is getting rarer as every summer passes ; the wild asparagus, once common on the Lizard promontory, is now only to be picked, at the imminent risk of life and limb, amongst the crannies of a rocky islet at Kynance Cove ; the purple viper's-bugloss has been driven to the very extremity of Britain at Penzance ; while the various kinds of rock-cistus, the Steep Holme pæony, and the Cheddar pink linger on each only in a single inaccessible spot in the south-western peninsula of England. These are clear evidences that they form the last stragglers of a vanquished flora, not the vanguard of a victorious and aggressive race.

And now we are in a position fairly to settle the problem where the hairy spurge and its fellows have come from, and how they got here. People who recognise the fact that Britain was once joined to the Continent are too apt to fancy that it was joined only by a sort of narrow bridge between Dover and Calais. The aspect of the shore on either side, the high bluffs of Shakespeare's Cliff and Cap Grisnez, the geological continuity between the chalk and the other formations on the two coasts, all forcibly suggest the notion that France and England must once have been joined there—as, indeed, they undoubtedly were. But we are all inclined mentally to minimise the amount of connection ; we stick in an isthmus just sufficient to carry the South-Eastern Railway across to Boulogne, and then we are fully satisfied with our new geography. In reality, however, the old land connection was something far more complete and universal than that. There is every reason to believe that, at the close of the last glacial epoch, Great Britain and Ireland formed a part of the Continent, not in the sense in which Scandinavia or Denmark still does, but in the sense in which Bavaria and Switzerland still do. The land of Europe then stretched out to seaward far beyond Ireland, Spain, and the Farøe Islands ; and Cork, Glasgow, and Liverpool then stood further inland than Lyons, Munich, and Geneva stand at the present day.

Walking one morning last winter—a day or so after the terrible Tuesday—on the Parade at Hastings, I happened to notice a curiously shaped flint among the shingle just thrown up by the great storm. The waves had beaten right over the sea-wall, and scattered wrack and pebbles along the whole roadway. I stooped down and picked up the

odd-looking fragment ; to my surprise, I found it was a palæolithic implement, a rudely chipped flint knife of the older stone age, the relic of a race compared with whom even the builders of Wansdyke here were men of yesterday. This rude flake was fashioned by the naked black-fellows who hunted the rhinoceros and the mammoth in the English valleys, before ever the great ice age itself had spread its glaciers over the length and breadth of the land, a couple of hundred thousand years since. Its outer surface was dulled and whitened by age, as is always the case with these primæval flint weapons ; but its edge was still sharp and keen, though crusted in places with a hard film of mineral deposit, and also blunted here and there by use in cutting clubs and reindeer bones for its savage possessor. But there were no traces of rolling as in water-worn pebbles : the knife was freshly disinterred. It was clear that the storm had just unearthed it from beneath the submerged forest which belts all the coast from Beachy Head to Dungeness. For the forest is a post-glacial deposit ; and it once formed part of this great connecting land, now buried beneath the Atlantic, the English Channel, and the German Ocean. The trees which compose it still stand as upright stumps, firmly bedded in a layer of tenacious clay ; and strewn beneath them lie prostrate boles, in the very places where the wind threw them down some fifty or sixty thousand years ago. In the public garden at Hastings, one of these huge balks, dug up on the St. Leonard's beach, has been fixed as a curiosity ; and, though its outer layer is charred and blackened by the water, the inner wood is still as sound and as firm as on the day it fell. For we have to deal here with a time which is marvellously ancient indeed when measured by our ordinary human and historical chronology, but which is quite modern when judged by the vast timepiece of cosmical and geological cycles.

All round the coast of England you will find endless traces of these submerged forests, especially wherever the land shelves off slowly to seaward. That most lively of mediæval travellers, Giraldus Cambrensis (whose amusing and somewhat slangy diary would be much more read, I am sure, if people did not incongruously mistake him for a dry chronicler of the monastic sort) gives a full and really scientific account of one which he came across in the course of his Welsh peregrinations ; and ever since his time the submerged forests have been noted in spot after spot in every part of Southern Britain. Beginning in the great bight between Wales and Scotland, they continue round the coast at Holyhead ; turn up again in Cardigan Bay ; fringe the whole Bristol Channel ; fill in the bottom of the fiords at Falmouth, Dartmouth, Torquay, and Exmouth ; trend round the Isle of Wight, Selsea, and Pevensey Bay ; appear sparingly off the Essex coast ; and thence run up by Cromer and the Wash to Holderness and Lindisfarne. They are everywhere newer than the glacial deposits, and so they give us a fair ground for believing that a great general subsidence of the land has taken place all round the shore of England at a comparatively recent period—that is to say, since the

close of the last glacial epoch. How recent they are is well shown by the nature of the remains themselves ; for they often contain undecayed leaves, water-logged hazel-nuts, bits of small twigs, and other forestine rubbish of a perfectly fresh and modern-looking character. Some of the twigs even break with a sharp crackling sound, like dry wood taken from a modern forest.

The question now remains, if the land once thus extended further out to sea than at present, how far out did it extend ? or, in other words, how large a subsidence has taken place ? Here we have an excellent hint for our guidance in the fact that Ireland must have been united to England since the glacial epoch, because we find in Ireland a large proportion of the British plants and animals, including a considerable number of land mammals. Now, how much must we raise the general land surface of the British Isles in order to unite Ireland to Great Britain ? Well, a rise of less than one hundred fathoms would suffice to join the whole of our islands throughout nearly all their length, leaving only two large lakes in the very deepest parts of the sea, where the plummet marks a depth of a hundred and fifty fathoms. One of these two large lakes would lie between Galloway and Ulster, and the other would fill up the hollow of the Minch between the Hebrides and the Isle of Skye. But the same amount of elevation would also suffice to unite us to the Continent from Denmark to Spain, as well as to push out our whole coast-line about fifty miles to the westward of Cape Clear. Beyond that distance the sea-bottom suddenly topples over from a general depth of a hundred fathoms to a depth of a thousand fathoms or more ; which clearly shows that this line, curving round from Shetland to the Spanish shore of the Asturias, must mark an old and long-continued prehistoric land-barrier. In other words, the British Isles are situated on a comparatively shallow submarine bank, which spreads north, south, and east of them, but ends abruptly to the westward by a sudden drop of eight or nine hundred fathoms. If you were now to raise this bank a hundred fathoms in height, you would lift its whole area above the sea-level, save only in the two hollows already noted ; but if you went on raising it for several hundred fathoms more, you would not materially alter the coast-line established by your first elevation. So we can hardly doubt that the hundred-fathom line really represents the old western boundary of Europe towards the Atlantic, because it coincides so nearly in depth with the elevation necessary to unite England and Ireland to one another, and to the Continent.

Only one element of our problem now remains to be solved ; and that is the question—When did the subsidence take place which turned the dry land all round Britain into the beds of the English Channel, the German Ocean, and the Irish Sea ? To this question I am deferentially inclined to give a somewhat different answer from that of most of our authorities. As a rule, it seems to be implied that the subsidence was a single act, spread indeed over a considerable length of time, but com-

pleted once for all, and never since renewed. It appears to me more probable, however, that the subsidence has been going on more or less ever since the age of the submerged forests, and that it still continues in places over the same area. Mr. Wallace has already pointed out that Ireland was probably separated from the mainland sooner than England, because it has fewer native mammals and hardly any reptiles or amphibians. The happy immunity from toads and serpents which is generally attributed to the pious exertions of St. Patrick, may perhaps rather be set down to the early isolation of Ireland from the mainland shortly after the end of the great ice age, and before all the members of the new European fauna had had time to spread equally over the more outlying portions of the yet undivided continent. But there are other indications of subsequent partial submergence elsewhere. Many facts lead to the belief that the Bristol Channel was still a plain through which the Severn flowed quietly to the sea long after the final insulation of Ireland and the Hebrides. Tourists driving from Barmouth to Port Madoc have looked down from the picturesque escarpment of Harlech Castle upon a narrow belt of plain between the mountains and the sea, and have been told how the Lowland Hundred once stretched outward from this point across Cardigan Bay as far as Sarn Badrig or St. Patrick's Causeway, a rocky reef which whitens the sea into a long line of breakers in the middle distance. Welsh legends, immortalised by Peacock's delicious satire, tell us how the hundred was submerged by an inundation; and the tradition as to this subsidence is almost certainly correct. There is some ground for believing that the Isle of Wight was still united at ebb tide to the mainland of Hampshire by a sandy isthmus, when the Romans built their villas at Brading; and we know that even as late as the days when Hengest and Horsa launched their mythical long ships for the conquest of Kent, the Zuyder Zee was yet undoubtedly an inland lake, separated from the German Ocean by a long belt of land now almost entirely submerged, save in the solitary line of islands which preserves the outline of its northern shore. Nay, even in our own time, the southern part of Sweden is slowly sinking by inches beneath the level of the Baltic. Hence I am strongly inclined to suspect that the submergence of this western land was a work of time, and that no particular date can be assigned to it as a whole.

Now, when a continuous belt of lowland stretched round from Spain to Ireland and the Shetlands, we can easily understand that the warm type of south European plants would run northward along its western shore as far as the climatic conditions permitted. But the climate on all the west coast of northern Europe is exceptionally mild and moist, through the agency of the Gulf Stream and the warm westerly breezes which blow across it. Hence it is not surprising that the Mediterranean heath, the strawberry tree, the pæony, the hairy spurge, and all the other southern plants which I have before scheduled, should have ranged all along the Atlantic shore of Europe, past the Pyrenees and

the Asturias, up the bend a hundred and fifty miles west of the Land's End, and so onward to Kerry and Connemara. Dr. James Geikie has recently shown good reasons for believing that the last glacial epoch was immediately succeeded by a short spell—say a thousand years or so—of very sunny and genial conditions in northern Europe; and while these favourable conditions lasted we can readily understand that the southern flora may even have extended along the sheltered belt beneath the mountain-ranges of Ireland and Scotland as far northward as Bute and Arran, where some few of its hardier representatives are actually still preserved. Meanwhile, the eastern level slope of what is now England, together with Holland and the intervening land which then filled up the basin of the German Ocean, must have had an inland continental climate, exposed to the full rigour of the north-east winds, and unmitigated by the warmth and moisture now diffused over it by the sea and its currents. In short, the condition of that great tableland must have been much like the condition of Central Russia at the present day, aggravated perhaps by an extra elevation to some hundreds of feet above its existing level. Here, then, the flora must have been of the central European and Scandinavian type; while west of the great central range of England, the trees and flowers must in the main have resembled those which we now find among the nooks of the Apennines and the Genoese Riviera.

By-and-by, however, the earth's crust began to sink in western Europe, as it is sinking now in Scania and the bed of the southern Baltic. Slowly the great Atlantic plain disappeared below the waters, leaving only the mountain-tops and higher plateaus as islands above the sea-level. First the two lateral valleys of the old lake-system were flooded, cutting off Ireland and the western Hebrides as two large and compact islands, considerably bigger than they now remain at the present day. Then, doubtless, the North Sea and the Channel were overflowed, leaving only a narrow neck of chalk downs as a connecting link between Kent and Picardy, which the waves gradually beat down and at last destroyed. The cliffs of Dover and Cap Blancnez, of Beachy Head and Dieppe, now mark its limits. Still the Bristol Channel remained an open valley, and Scilly was united to the Cornish peninsula. Next, Scilly and the Channel Islands went; while the Hebrides and the western coast of Scotland broke up into a number of separate islets, only the granite crests of the higher mountain-ranges now overtopping the water in long lines, while the lateral valleys became the straits which separate the various members of the different archipelagos from their nearest neighbours. Any one who has once yachted down the broken ridge of the Outer Hebrides cannot fail to have noticed that they seem but the summits of a vast sunken range, jagged and beaten at the outer edge by the ceaseless dash of the Atlantic. Last of all, apparently, went Anglesey, Wight, and the coastwise eyots, as well as the Bristol Channel. On the protected eastern shore of Britain generally, the low

slopes have survived well enough, and patches of shingle and sand, like the Dogger Bank, still mark the position of the higher sunken lands ; but on the west and north the open Atlantic has eaten away all but the most sheltered plains, and cut its way at all exposed points into the heart of the hills, giving rise to the magnificent cliff scenery of Cornwall, Kerry, and the western Highlands. If you stand upon the shore of Coboe Bay in Guernsey, and look at low tide across the vast floor of jagged and water-fretted granite rocks which line its bottom, you will see with what force the waves have wormed their way over all the lowland ; and they will only halt when they have planed down the whole of the island, as they have already planed down the lesser land which once stretched out to northward beyond the solitary pinnacles of the Casquets.

When all these changes had taken place, the stray members of the southern flora in Cornwall, Devon, Kerry, and Connemara would find themselves quite cut off from their fellows in the Mediterranean, the Pyrenees, and the Asturias. For the water has eaten away almost all the plain of the Bay of Biscay, save only a comparatively insignificant angle between the Loire, the mountains of Auvergne, and the roots of the Pyrenees ; and it has left the high and bleak granitic moorland of Brittany jutting out alone into the western sea. But Brittany looks northward, and is open only to the chilliest winds ; while its fair share of the Gulf Stream is diverted by currents due to the lay of the land in Cornwall. Moreover, the great bight of Biscay distracts and upsets the old run of the water, so that the whole shore of France from the Garonne northward is really colder and less equable in temperature than Cornwall and Kerry, or even than the average of our own western and southern coast. The Vendée is a chilly marshland ; Bretagne Bretonnante is a high and wind-swept heath. On the other hand, our extreme southwestern peninsulas and islands are bathed on every side by the warm water of the Gulf Stream, and so possess an unusually mild, damp, and equable climate. Every one has heard of the semi-tropical vegetation of palms and aloes which flourishes in the open air at Tresco Abbey in the Scilly Isles. Here, then, we have exactly the conditions under which the southern plants, though beaten back to the very base of the hills, might still manage to keep up a precarious existence in a few scattered and sheltered nooks. And that is exactly what they have done. Separated from all the rest of their kind, exposed to occasional hard winters or heavy frosts, and slowly dying out under our very eyes, they have yet left here and there a few isolated descendants to tell the story of their origin and their failure. Curiously enough, these little lingering colonies of Mediterranean plants exist only on the southern and western slopes, among the cliffs and combes and bays which face and overlook the submerged lands whence their ancestors were driven by the advancing sea. So oddly do they confine themselves to the islands and the most insular peninsulas that their geographical distribution almost looks like a preconcerted arrangement.

Thus we may observe once more that one little islet of the Bristol Channel alone preserves the red pæony. Holyhead Island has half-a-dozen rare species. The Jersey centauray, Pelisser's linaria, and several other southern flowers, have died out everywhere save in the Channel Islands. Scilly shares with them in the sand bird's foot. The Irish Arran and other Irish islands have many peculiar species; and a few southern types even reach Bute and the western Highlands; for, as every one knows, Rothery has a climate almost as warm as Torquay. So, too, with the peninsulas. The Lizard, with the most equable temperature on the English coast, is a perfect mine of wealth to the botanist. It has three peculiar southern clovers, and lots of other rarities. Penzance, at the very horn of Cornwall, has five or six specialities. The position of Kerry gives it a climate like that of Finisterre, with the appropriate flora. Wild madder belongs only to a few headlands of Pembrokeshire, the Damnonian peninsula, and the south-west of Ireland. Torquay, on the promontory of Hope's Nose, shares a southern buplever with the Channel Islands. Babbicombe has a species almost to itself. Corfe Castle, in the so-called Isle of Purbeck in Dorset, divides a Spanish heather with Cornwall and the West of Ireland. One kind of rest-harrow, after getting up from the Pyrenees as far as the Channel Islands, then positively takes a second spring to the Mull of Galloway. As to the number of Mediterranean plants which are found in Britain only in Devon and Cornwall, or in Kerry and Connemara, or in both, I spare you the recital of them. Even the more inland and moorland types, which each survive on one high common alone, answer to the same law; for they occur on the warmest moors, in the neighbourhood of the sunniest south-western slopes. Thus the Cheddar pink grows in a single basking hollow heated by radiation from two great walls of limestone rock upon the western flanks of Mendip; the purple lobelia loiters on a bright upland near the warm valley of the Devonshire Axe; the white sedum struggles on upon the edge of Malvern; and my hairy wood-spurge here battles hard for life on Claverton Down, close to the steaming basin of the old Roman Thermæ at Bath.

And so I end where I began. My sermon has led me far afield; but, like a good preacher, I have come back to my text. I have only touched lightly upon the simplest and least technical proofs; but when the whole evidence is put together—as I do not pretend to put it together off-hand, sitting here cross-legged on the edge of Wansdyke—there can be very little reasonable doubt that this is something like the way in which the hairy wood-spurge first found its way to Prior Park Lane. So I have gathered my little morsel tenderly and carefully, not injuring the plant more than I can help by my clumsiness; and I hope all future botanisers will do the same, in order to aid in preserving and handing down to after ages this interesting fragment of old English history, kept green and vital for us all in the tiny blossom of a wayside weed.

Among the Dictionaries.

TIME was, in literature, when there were no Dictionaries. Of course. Letters had their small diffusion, *vivâ voce*. The few Sauls, for all the generations, could ask the fewer Gamaliels, on the quick moment, for the short interpretation that should make passages in their ornamented or antiquated disquisitions clear ; and there was no need for more. By the lip, could be solved the mystery coming from the lip ; for within the portico, in the cloister, under the shade there on the hill, the master sat in the midst of his pupils, and the lip was near.

It ended, this. Pupils, when knowledge was called for in distant parts, had to be dispersed. Each stood solitary then, or nearly solitary, separated from the schools whence scholarly help could be drawn. Yet each stood facing a crowd grouped round him to be taught ; and each, at some word, at some clause, at some peroration, at some pregnant cornerstone of an argument he was burning to launch straight home, found the text of his parchment a pit, or a stumbling-block, hindering him. The treasured MS. was of his own copying, nearly for a certainty. That did not affect the case. As he read from it—spread on his knee, perhaps, a scroll ; laid open upon a desk, leaved, and laboriously and delicately margined, and stitched and covered and clasped into the form of a goodly book—he had to expound its learned method so that it should touch the simple ; or, bewildering him sadly, he had to turn its words from the Greek, from the Hebrew, from any master-tongue, into the language, even the dialect, familiar to his audience—a language often harshly unfamiliar to himself—and the right way to do this would again and again refuse to come to him, and his message failed. There was the pity of it ; there was the grief. It could not be allowed to abide. And at last there occurred to him the remedy. In his quiet hours, his flock away, he would pore over his MS. afresh. It might be Missal, it might be Commentary, Treatise, Diatribe, Epic Poem, Homily, Holy Writ—the same plan would be efficacious for each one. After beating out the meaning of the crabbed, the Oriental, characters—of the painstaking, level, faultless Gothic letter—he would write this meaning, this exposition, this *gloss*, above each word, each phrasing, that had given him trouble ; and then, thenceforth, and for ever, such gloss would be there to see and to use, and every difficulty would have been made, magically, to disappear. Good. The goodness must be manifest at once. Only there is a fact remaining, requiring acute indication. At the very first word the very first of these conscientious old-world scholars thus glossed or explained,

the seed was sown of the new-world Dictionaries ; and there has been no stop to the growth of this seed till the tree from it has spread its thick and wide branches as far as they have spread, and are still spreading, in this very to-day.

Perhaps this may seem remote? Short work will be enough to show how it was done. Pupils, or call them young or less-instructed associates, of a master, had again, and after a lapse of time in greater numbers, to be dispersed. After the lapse of time, also, MSS. were ordered to be executed for royal and other wealthy readers, too much engrossed by state and duties to be able to keep to the set places and hours of a class. As for the young associates, they would have read from their master's glossed MSS. during their pupilage, had they had to take their duties whilst they were absent, whilst they were ill. As for the newly-finished MSS., it would have been destruction to their cherished neatness, to their skilled beauty, to have defaced them with glosses here and there, as glosses were, in patches, and generally, for greater conspicuousness, written in red letters. Glossed words were written in a list apart, then ; becoming, in this way, companion to the student, enlightenment to the MS., and enlightenment almost as handy as if it had been delivered from the tongue. Particular exposition of a particular master came to be especially demanded, too ; from veneration, for [comparison, to settle a dispute, for the mere admiration and interest of seeing what another man had done. Such exposition was, perforce, on a separate list. Such expositions, moreover—coming as they did, one perhaps from a scholar at Rhegium, one from Nysa, one from Alexandria, Rome, Constantinople, Rhodes—could be readily perceived to possess colour from the temperament, from the circumstances, of the writer ; and it followed, as a simple consequence, that two or more should be set^rout, methodically, side by side. Here, then, was the form of a dictionary ; the germ of it, its manner. Here a word stood, with a series of interpretations to it ; the whole to be read at one consulting, and giving employment to the critical faculty of rejection or approval. For, this duplication, this triplication, this multiplication, as it grew to be, had its own excellent relish, and the very relish suggested something more. There would have been the word *exilis*, put it. One teacher would recommend it to be rendered *thin* (of course, the equivalent to these shades of thought, according to the tongue being used and elucidated) ; another teacher, of wider thought, would expound it *mean* ; another, living amidst bleak rocks, perhaps, and these helping his asceticism, would set down *barren* ; another, applying the thinness and tenuity to some musical sounds remaining in his memory, would write it *shrill*, *treble*. To say this, is but to say how language itself accumulated, and had expansion. Yet it suggests the mode. It points out how, when each word had such various glosses put to it, richness could not fail to arise ; and diversity, and discrimination, with greater or less delicacy of expression ; and how glosses being born—or, christen them with that longer name of glossaries—were never likely to be let to die.

There has to be recollection, however, that, as these glossaries were limited to gleanings from one MS., or to gleanings from various copies of that same one MS., according to what, of fresh interpretation, each separate owner had glossed, so they were limited to explaining one author; or to explaining such limited portion of one author as one MS. contained. Thus one glossary would elucidate a Gospel; one, a set of Epistles; one, a Prophet; one, Virgil, Horace, Homer, Euripides. The Epinal Gloss is an existing example, luckily for the literary world, of such an accumulation. In MS. still, it is still, by the religious treasuring it has had at Epinal, precisely as it was at its compilation 1,200 years ago (in the course now, however, of being printed here, lent by the French Government for that purpose); and it is testimony, teeming with interest, of how far Dictionary-life, in its day, had advanced. Progressing still, there was the Latin *Glossary* of Varro, dedicated to his contemporary Cicero. There was the *Lexicon* of Apollonius the Sophist, in the first century, elucidating the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. There was the *Onomasticon* of Pollux; Pollux, instructor to the Emperor Commodus, having produced this, a Greek Vocabulary, expressly for his imperial pupil's use. There was the *Lexicon* of Harpocration, in the fourth century, relating only to the Ten Orators of Greece. There was the valuable work of Hesychius of Alexandria. There was the *Glossary* of Photius, written in the ninth century: all of these having been printed at Venice and kindred places, after centuries of chrysalis-life in MS., almost as soon as printing was available; and this particular Photian *Glossary* having been re-edited here by Porson, and even called for, after Porson's death, later still, viz. in 1822. There was the *Lexicon* of Suidas, collected by him in the tenth century, and printed at Milan in 1499; remarkable for the plan, first used in it, of giving extracts from the poets and historians it explained to explain them better, and for thus widening considerably the already widening field of the lexicographical art. There was the Dictionary, in the thirteenth century, of John Balbus, called John of Genoa; a Latin work extending to 700 pages folio, that has further notability from having been the first in type, Gutenberg himself having printed it at Mayence, in 1460. There was the Dictionary, printed at Vicenza in 1483, of Johannes Crestonus, in Greek and Latin; both, also, a development. There was the Latin Dictionary of Calepino, first printed at Reggio in 1502, and enjoying, like the Greek Dictionary of Photius, continued re-editing down to the present century. But the expansion of the gloss-seed, as shown in all these instances, having reached the point at which there was recognition of the fact that the search for words was a distinct branch of letters, worthy of a special hand possessing special scholarly attainments, the period of English Dictionaries has been touched, and the subject must have treatment assuming different proportions.

It will have been understood—up to this point, of course—that the aim of all the early word-works that have been enumerated was merely to give explanations of rare words, difficult words; words known, shortly,

as "hard." This continued. English lexicographers, at this outset of their career, and for centuries, did not go beyond. They grew very pleasant, they were quaint, they were concentrated, they were rambling, delightful, either way ; and, they shall be their own exemplification.

The *Promptorium Parvulorum* heads the list ; the *Little Expeditior*, or the *Little Discloser*, as it might (very freely) be translated. Alas, that it should be so small ! That "hard" words were so scant then, it has such few pages that they can be run through in a moderate reading. Its style is to go from A to Z alphabetically, but to have its nouns in one list, its verbs in another ; to give nothing but these nouns and verbs ; and, being written in English first to help English students to Latin, it has no complementary half for those who, having a Latin word, want to turn it into English. "Gredynesse of mete," it says, "Aviditas. Gredynesse in askynge, Procacitas. Fadyr and modyr yn one worde, Parens. False and deceyvable and yvel menynges, Versutis, Versipellis. Golet or Throte, Guttar, Gluma, Gola. Clepyn or Callyn, Voco." Its date is 1440, about ; it was written by a Norfolk man (as the preface tells) ; Richard Francis, think some ; Galfridus Grammaticus, as is conjectured by others ; it was first printed in 1499, appeared three or four times again when 1500 was just turned, and has had a careful reprint recently by the Camden Society, under the capable editing of Mr. Albert Way. Immediately succeeded, this, by the *Catholicon Anglicum*, dated 1483, but never in print till the Early English Text Society was granted the privilege of publishing it a very few years ago ; by the *Medulla Grammaticæ* ; by the *Ortus Vocabulorum* based upon it, and printed in 1500 (these being Latin) ; by Palsgrave's *Lesclaircissement de la Langue Francoyse*, printed in 1530 ; by Wyllyam Salesbury's Dictionary in Englyshe and Welshe, printed in 1547 ; there came the English Dictionary proper of Richard Huloet, that first went to the press in 1552. The edition of this by John Higgins, printed a few years later, is a volume that is beautiful even by the standard of to-day. It is folio ; generously thick ; perfect in its neatness ; its double columns are regularly arranged, with the headings B ante A, B ante E (the fair forerunner of the present mode BAB, BAC, &c.) ; and, intended to give English and Latin and French, it puts the English in black letter, the Latin in Roman, the French in italics ; unless, indeed, the French is evidently not in Richard Huloet's knowledge, when Huloet calmly omits it altogether. Here is his manner :—

Apple, called Apple John, or Saint John's Apple, or a sweting, or an apple of paradise. Malum, musteum, Melinelum, quod minimum durat celeriter-que mitescit. Pomme de paradis.

Here again :—

Pickers, or thieves that go by into chambers, making as though they sought something. Diætarii. Ulpian. Larrons qui montent jusques aux chambres, faisant semblant de chercher quelque chose.

"For the better attayning of the knowledge of words," says this good

Richard Huloet, "I went not to the common Dictionaries only, but also to the authors themselves. . . . and finally, I wrate not in the whole booke one quyre without perusing and conference of many authors. . . . Wherefore, gentle reader, accept my paynes as thou wouldest others should (in like case) accept thine."

The *Manipulus Vocabulorum*, written by Peter Levens in 1570, printed then, by Henrie Bynneman, in 77 leaves quarto, and reprinted, a few years since, under the careful supervision of Mr. H. B. Wheatley, appeals quite as prettily to have its claims considered. "Some will say," writes Peter Levens, "that it is a superfluous and unnecessary labour to set forth this Dictionarie, for so much as Maister Huloet hath sette forthe so worthie a worke of the same kinde already. But . . . his is great and costly, this is little and of light price; his for greter students and them that are richable to have it, this for beginners and them that are pooreable to have no better; his is ful of phrases and sentences fit for them that use oration and oratorie, this is onely stuffed full of words." And there the words are: in English first, in Latin after; in double columns; and the English to rhyme, "for Scholers as use to write in English Méetre," thus:—Bande, Brande, Hande, Lande, Sande, Strande, &c., with the Latin for each at the side. Over the errata at the end Peter Levins writes, "Gentle Reader, amende these fautes escaped;" and the only wish to the modern reader is that there was more matter to read, even if it enforced the amendment of fautes indeed.

Contemporary with this, was a *Shorte Dictionarie in Latin and English verie profitable for yong Beginners*, by J. Withals. It is a charming-looking little book, octavo, only half an inch thick, light and supple as a pocket-book, with its matter in double columns, the English first, and the "catch-words" of this still in black letter. Wynkyn de Worde printed it in its early editions, and it was printed again and again by others, down to 1599. *A Little Dictionarie for Children*, says J. Withals, as a running title all along the pages of it; but he gives the puzzled little Elizabethan children no alphabet to guide them, and only divides his articles into what appears to him to be subjects. "The Times," he says, as a promising heading to one of these; then under it he puts such odd times as "A meete tyme, To sit a sunning, A fielde beginning to spring, A fielde beginning to wax greene," and so forth. In *Certaine Phrases for Children to use in familiar speeche*, J. Withals is as quaint to the very end. "Away and be hanged!" he puts ready for his little Tudor schoolboys, rendering it "Abi hinc in malam rem." And, "I am scarselye mine owne man," "Vix sum apud me." *Evans*. What is fair, William? *Will*. Pulcher. *Evans*. What is lapis, William? *Will*. A stone. *Evans*. That is good, William." So it is; and in J. Withals may be seen the very manner of the acquisition of it.

John Baret, in 1573, most fitly joins and ornaments this group. The
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title of his Dictionary is *An Alvearie* (a beehive); and he, in a manner, sets out the development of the Gloss, even from the area of his own experience. "About eyghteene years agoe," he writes, "having pupils at Cambridge studious of the Latin tongue," they "perceyving what great trouble it was to come running to mee for every word they missed I appoynted them every day to write English before ye Latin, and likewise to gather a number of fine phrases out of Cicero, Terence, Cæsar, Livie, &c., and to set them under severall tytles, for the more ready finding them againe at their neede" when as "within a yeare or two they had gathered together a great volume," he called them his diligent bees, and their great volume an alvearie. It is curious, this, as being plain, though not unexpected, witness. So, also, does John Baret throw other curious light, and mark some progress. "A Goast" shows his method. Thus:—

A Goast, an image in man's imaginatioⁿ. Spectrum, tri, n.g., Cic. Phantasme, vision. La semblence des choses que nostre pensee ha conceue;

in the Latin part of which there will be noted the first appearance of a declension and an authority. This attractive work began by being a triple Dictionary—English, Latin, French; and in later editions grew to a quadruple Dictionary, with Greek added. The French, however, as with Richard Huloet, is omitted again and again; and "as for Greeke," says John Baret himself, "I coulde not ioyn it with every Latin word, for lacke of fit Greeke letters, the printer not having leasure to provide the same!" And it is a confession far too pretty not to have this small resuscitation.

By these examples, French, Latin, Greek are proved to have been imperative to the home-life of (educated) mediævals; and "neat Italy"—for all that Rome, the heart of it, was somewhat out of favour—was not to be unrepresented by the Dictionary-makers under Elizabeth. John Florio, who was English except by extraction, who was teacher of French and Italian at Oxford, and, on the accession of James the First, appointed tutor to the poor Prince Henry, his son, published an Italian and English Dictionary in 1598. Italian first, he put, and put no more; but within ten years, Giovanni Torriano, a fellow-teacher and an Italian, in London, seeing (it may be supposed) the value of Baret's Latin and French and Greek lists—cumbrous and inefficient as they were—provided Florio's book with a second and better half, viz. English words first and Italian after, in the present full manner; thus bringing bi-lingual Dictionaries up to a standard from which, to be complete, there could be no departing any more.

"Lettere di scatola," says John Florio; letting him speak for himself, "or Lettere di spetiale, great letters, text characters, such as in Apothecaries shops are written on their boxes that every man may read them afar off, and know what they contain: Used by Metaphor for To speak plainly, without fear." Also, John Florio gives column

after column of Italian proverbs, of which here are two, both touching his craft:—

Le parole non s'infilzano—Words do not thriddle themselves.

I fatti son maschi, le parole son femine—Deeds are masculine, words are women.

A splendid volume by Cotgrave, a French and English Dictionary, folio, clean, exact, of most accurate printing, advanced to the three index-letters at the head of each column, in the perfect form of to-day, was published in 1611. "A Bundle of Words," Cotgrave calls it, in a fatherly, fondling way, when asking Lord Burleigh, in his preface, to look upon it with favour. And he puts his errata at the very beginning, before ever he opens his bundle, because "I (who am no God, or Angel) have caused such overslips as have yet occurred to mine eye or understanding, to be placed neere the forehead of this Verball Creature." The novelty in this "Verball Creature," or the stride made by it, is the Grammar appended, with the French verbs conjugated in the manner still used to-day. *Aller*, says Cotgrave, in a mode bald enough; but his English explanation of the word is a glory. It says, "To goe, walke, wend, march, pace, tread, proceed, journey, travell, depart," with forty or fifty picturesque illustrations, such as "*Aller à S. Bezet*, To rest in no place, continually to trot, gad, wander up and down;" such as "*Tout le monde s'en va à la moustarde*—'Tis common vulgar, Divulged all the world over (said of a booke), Wast paper is made of it, Mustard pots are stoppled with it (so much the world esteems it)." This is a small sample, but it shows, amply, that the "Verball Creature" it is pulled from is a "Bundle of Words" that would bear much more unpacking and much more close overhauling.

Another genuine English Dictionary must be taken from the shelf now. It could scarcely present itself in more enticing guise. It is smaller even than Withals' Latin and English Dictionary was; it is thinner, narrower, more supple, more suited still to be one number of a Portable Library, and the one never likely to be left behind. Being English explaining English, this diminutive size seems curious—until there is consideration. It is that "hard" English words, even in this day of John Bullokar, the author, were still few; that John Bullokar's columns and pages were consequently few, to match. "I open the significations of such words to the capacite of the ignorant," he writes, writing from "my house at Chicester in Sussex, this 17 day of October, 1616." "It is familiar among best writers to usurp strange words" now; yet "I suppose withall their desire is that they should also be understoode, which I . . . have endeavoured by this Booke, though not exquisitely, . . . to perform." Yet it is exquisitely performed. "A Girl," says the performer—in proof of his exquisiteness—"a Roe Bucke of two yeares"—for he is far too earnest in his desire for consistency to put any explanation to Girl except that which is very "hard" indeed. "Have a care," he says, too, warningly (and warningly, without

a suspicion of it), "to search every word according to the true Orthography thereof; as for Phoenix in the letter P, not F; for Hypostaticall in Hy, not in Hi." And he gives a note of Natural History (amidst some scores) that must be turned to before his pages are closed and he is laid aside. A Crocodile, he says (after a column and a half of description of it) "will weepe over a man's head when he hath devoured the body, and then wil eate up the head two. . . . I saw once one of these beasts in London, brought thither dead, but in perfect forme, of about 2 yards long;" in which detail of personal experience he shows what was tolerated, and even expected, in a Dictionary in his time; and he gives what is, in this time, a very enriching flavour.

John Minsheu, first publishing in 1599, but appearing in his better known form in 1617, only one year after Bullokar, must here have his greeting. "Some have affirmed," he says captivately, at the very onset, "that a Dictionarie in a yeere might be gathered compleat enough. I answer that in conceit it may be;" and, conceit being far away enough from his own composition, his answer carries with it every satisfaction. So does his Dictionary. It was, again, like Cotgrave's, and Florio's, and Baret's, and "Master Huloet's," an immense work; folio. It marked more progress, too. It was the first book ever published in England that appended a list of subscribers; and in matters appertaining solely (as the foregoing does not) to Dictionary-growth, it was the first that tried to fix the derivations of words; that aimed at regulating their sounds by putting accents; that gave some chapters of connected Familiar Conversations, or scenes, hoping them to be "profitable to the learned and not unpleasant to any other reader."

His Dictionary was, mainly, to teach Spanish; the edition of 1599 has Spanish first (for there had been reasons, for a good many years in that 16th century, why Spanish should want compassing by the English; and there were reasons, under James the First, when Minsheu went to the press again, that Spanish should be still well in courtly memory); so Minsheu says: "I accent every word in the whole Dictionary to cause the learner to pronounce it right, otherwise when he speaketh he shall not be understoode of the naturall Spaniard." "Lunch, or great piece," is his arrangement in his latter half, where he has English first, "vide Zouja." "A mer-Maide, vide Serena." "A Taunting Verse, vide Satyra." "A Tippling Gossip, vide Bevedora." This *vide* occurring at every one of the thousands of English words, without the art of book-making having advanced sufficiently for it to be seen that a note at the beginning of the division would have made such trouble and cost unnecessary.

A vastly different Dictionary was published by Henry Cockeram, in 1623. He thought that "Ladies and Gentlewomen, young schollers, clarkes, merchants, as also strangers of any nation," desirous of "a refined and elegant speech," would like an "Alphabeticall and English Expositor" of "vulgar words," "mocke words," "fustian termes,"

"ridiculously used in our language," so that they might look into such an Expositor "to receive the exact and ample word to expresse" what they required. Accordingly, he tells them that Rude is vulgar, and Agresticall the choice word they ought to use for it, or Rusticall, Immorigerous, Rurall; also, that To Weede is vulgar, and the choice word To Sarculate, To Diruncinate, To Averuncate; further, that to speak of To knocke one's legs in going, is vulgar; it should be called choicely To Interfeere. He puts down a "Glosse, a short exposition of any darke speech;" he makes his Glosse, in the shape his period had worked it into, an Exposition of very dark speech indeed. His Natural History is quite on a level with what he had seen in Dictionaries before. "The Barble," he says, as a specimen, "a Fish that will not meddle with the baite untill with her taile shee have unhooked it from the hooke."

But Thomas Blount, of the Inner Temple, barrister, in another little octavo published in 1656, elbows this Henry Cockeram aside, and has good reason for clamouring for attention. He wrote his Dictionary, he said ("*Glossographia*" in the title), "for all such as desire to understand what they read," and to save others from being, what he was, "often gravell'd." He had "gained a reasonable knowledge in the Latin and French," he declares, "and had a smattering of Greek and other Tongues;" uselessly, evidently; for these are some of the words he says are those that "gravell'd" him:—Basha, Seraglio, Turbant, the Salique Law, Daulphin, Escurial, Infanta, Sanbenito, Consul, Tribune, Obelisk, Vatican, Dictator. "Nay," he breaks out, "to that pass we are now arrived, that in London many of the tradesmen have new dialects: the Vintner will furnish you with Alicant, Tent, Sherbet, Coffee, Chocolate; the Tayler is ready to make you a Capouch, Rochet, or a Cloke of Drap de Berry; the Barber will modifie your Beard into A la Manchini; the Haberdasher is ready to furnish you with a Cassok; the Sempstress with a Crabbat and a Toylet." England had no Protectorate in respect of its English words, then, clearly—however carefully Cromwell might have been guarding English rights; and Puritanism found itself without a moment to spare to set a purist at the head of language.

Thomas Blount, however, has another claim, in Dictionary History, for distinct mention. When his *Glossographia* was only two years old, namely in 1658, he received deep offence. Edward Phillips, the son of Anne Milton, Milton's sister, publishing a folio Dictionary, the *New World of Words*, made Blount bring up his guns to try and shiver it to pieces, thereby ushering warfare into lexicography; and, giving such life to it, it has broken out, on one score or another, at the publication of almost every Dictionary since. Phillips copied out of Blount's little octavo wholesale; copying blunders and all, even to blunders of type, so that he stood there (in sheets, but not penitent) convicted. Many errors he made without copying, too; and simply for want of understanding; and for these, as well as the others, Blount pounces down upon him vigorously—Blount with all his quills high. He says, quot-

ing Phillips, "Gallon (Spanish), a measure containing two quarts. Our author had better omitted this word, since every alewife can contradict him." He says, quoting Phillips still, "Quaver, a measure of time in musick, being the half of a crotchet, as a crotchet the half of a quaver, a semiquaver, &c. What fustian is here! Just so, two is the half of four, and four the half of two; and semiquaver is explicated by a dumb &c.!" This suffices; anger not being a pleasing spectacle, nor inefficiency either. Besides, Phillips acquired wisdom enough to correct his errors—about forty years after he had made them, and when poor Blount was dead!—and, as he did do this, it is but mercy now to—shut him up, and put him by.

Echoing about still, however, are adverse criticisms of this unpleasing Roundhead, as another volume is taken down. "Phillips had neither skill, tools, nor materials," said the anonymous author of the *Glossographia Anglicana Nova*, publishing it in 1707. It is not his book, however, on which the fingers fall. Space is getting miserably short; there are nearly two centuries of Dictionaries yet to be accounted for; in the throng, many a folio, a quarto, an octavo must be passed untouched, and even unnamed, by; and this is one of them. Here is the bulky folio, though, the valuable folio, of Dr. Stephen Skinner; published in 1671, before Phillips had put on his sackcloth, and when Skinner, too, was endorsing the verdict that he ought to wear it. This must be handled for a moment, and have a little open spreading. It is a laborious Etymological Dictionary; large as full, full as large; it contains elaborate explanations of English words in Latin; it contains the etymologies of these words from the Latin, Greek, French, Anglo-Saxon, Italian, Spanish, Teutonic; with Minshew's derivations, and Spelman's derivations (as far as they existed), to compare; and it forms a whole that is a wonder, especially when it is considered that the author was in full practice in London as a physician, and died at the early age of forty-four. His manner was this:—

Platter: à Fr. Plat; Hisp. Plato; It. Piatto, Piatta; Teut. Platte; à Lat. Patina; Gr. . . .

omitted here, say, "for lacke of fit Greeke letters, the printer not having leasure," &c.; and omitting, likewise, a long definition of what a plate is in Latin—the real language of the book. It was quite concise; quite unornamented and undescented upon; just brief and sheer, straight up to the point; and it was precisely because it was this, that it had such value. Especial literary interest, moreover, will never fade away from it. It was with Johnson in that lodging in Holborn, in that "handsome house in Gough Square, Fleet Street," in that "upper room fitted up like a counting-house" where he and his six copyists spent those nine years engaged upon his Dictionary; and nothing, up to that date, was in existence so suited to the purpose. In company with the *Etymologicon Anglicanum* of Junius, it gave Johnson his etymologies ready to his hand, and saved him several years of unpalatable labour.

Nathan Bailey, appearing in 1721, was a fit auxiliary to Skinner, and has claims to notice yet more pressing. Reaching him (and skipping Coles, and Cocker, and Kersey, to do it—the which skipping is done ruefully, because of the rich provender they almost beg to be cropped away from them)—there can be a glance at once at Bailey's title. The *Universal Etymological English Dictionary*, it is; and in that word "Universal" is the sign that distinguishes it. Nathan Bailey had the genius to see that an art is no art that does not take in all sides of it; that in his art there ought to be a representation of all words—easy, as well as "hard;" "fustian," as well as euphuistic; current, as well as those out of date; and, being the first lexicographer who saw this, he was the first lexicographer to try and carry it out. His success was immense, and immediate. There were five editions of him; there were ten editions of him; there were fifteen; there were twenty; there were twenty-four. There were varieties of him, and many editions of each. At first he was octavo (but as broad in the back as he ought to be), with woodcuts—in which idea, also, he was an innovator—to show matter, such as heraldic coats, difficult to explain; then he was without the cuts, at the lowered price of 6s.; then he was in folio, in which commodious size he was the best help Johnson had of any. Having a folio copy interleaved, Johnson's notes were made on the blank sheets; and it stood, a secure and acknowledged foundation. The manner of Bailey, as shown in his work, overruns with character. "A cat may look at a king," he says, in black letter: proverbs being a part of his scheme, and his heart full in it: "This is a saucy proverb, generally made use of by pragmatistical persons, who must needs be censuring their superiors, take things by the worst handle, and carry them beyond their bounds: for tho' Peasants may look at and honour Great Men, Patriots, and Potentates, yet they are not to spit in their faces." "Sea-Unicorn, Unicorn-Whale," he says, in delightful continuation of his predecessors' Natural History; he being a thriving schoolmaster, and teaching only 150 years ago, let it be hinted: "A Fish eighteen foot long, having a head like a horse, and scales as big as a crown-pieee, six large fins like the end of a galley-oar, and a horn issuing out of the forehead nine feet long, so sharp as to pierce the hardest bodies." Can it not be seen how ignorance at home ought not to be surprising, and how, when the schoolmaster went abroad, there was plenty for him to put down in his note-book?

And now, is there to be anything of Johnson? What has been said, has been said with little skill, if there is not clear understanding by now that he was, glaringly, wanted. Bailey was the standard, there must be firm recollection, and remained the standard for thirty years. There was Dyche trying to run level paces with him, and a B. N. Defoe, and Sparrow, and Martin, and two or three known only by the name of their publishers—to have nothing here but this short enumeration there was even John Wesley. John Wesley's ideas of a Dictionary were such that he had the modesty to place himself only in duodecimo; only

in a hundred pages ; only with one column to a page ; with which circumstances, John Wesley's modesty ended. "The author assures you," he brags, "he thinks this the best English Dictionary in the world ;" and the sleek conceit of him (lexicographically) would almost show cause why he should not have place in serious business at all. "Many are the mistakes in all the other English Dictionaries which I have yet seen," he adds, "whereas I can truly say I know of none in this ;" and as he has thus pointed his finger at "mistakes"—at ignorance, his pointing is his passport, even if there were nothing more in it than the delicious manner in which it is done. But there is far more in it. For science was awakening, when Wesley was preaching—and writing a Dictionary. Cook was circumnavigating the globe ; Banks was labouring at his botany ; Solander was with them ; philosophy, on every hand, was drawing her robes around her, and taking philosophic shaping. With specimens, human and brute, being brought home from voyages triumphantly achieved, with drawings and measurements to show other objects not so conveniently preserved, it would no longer do to have Dictionaries, or, say, Verball Creatures, stuffed full of fins like galley-oars, of crocodiles' tears. Ignorant men, consulting these, became more ignorant ; scientific men, consulting them, could only turn from the columns and give—according to their temper—a laugh or a sneer. So Johnson had to be set to work. He was a scholar ; he was an academic ; he was a man of letters. His pen could run—circuitously, it is true, with overmuch of pomp ; but the bound of it had vigour ; its stateliness had caught the public eye. And a little knot of publishers, acutely seeing the commercial side of this, had interviews with him, negotiated with him, let him know that he was the man. Poor Johnson ! He had, he says in his preface, "the dreams of a poet ;" he was "doomed at last to wake a lexicographer !" He wrote having "little assistance of the learned, and without any patronage of the great ; not in the soft obscurities of retirement or under the shelter of academick bowers, but amidst inconvenience and distraction, in sickness and in sorrow." Yes. His "Tetty" died during the nine years his Dictionary occupied him ; he was not able during the nine years to remain in one home. He had to leave that lodging in Holborn, where he and his six copyists sat in an upper chamber fitted up like a counting-house ; he had to get another lodging in Gough Square. Worse than all, he "soon discovered that the bulk of my volumes would fright away the student ; thus to the weariness of copying I was condemned to add the vexation of expunging ;" and "I have not always executed my own scheme, or satisfied my own expectations ;" and he had to collect materials by "fortuitous and unguided excursions into books," out of "the boundless chaos of living speech ;" and he knew that "among unhappy mortals is the writer of Dictionaries, the slave of science, doomed only to remove rubbish," and that, though "every other author may aspire to praise, the lexicographer can only hope to escape reproach !" Yes. And let the sigh come out again, Poor

Johnson! "Lexicographer," he writes, when he has worked up to that word in his two giant volumes—that are half a yard high, that are nearly a foot wide, that are nearly a finger thick, that weigh pounds and pounds—"Lexicographer;" and he puts to it the celebrated definition, "A writer of Dictionaries; a harmless drudge that busies himself in tracing the original, and detailing the significance of words." And can it cause wonder? Leaving that, however, which was personal to Johnson, let notice be taken solely to Johnson's work. Attention must be called to that spelling "Dictionaries." It is an error crept in. It is an earnest of a thousand errors—and weaknesses, and omissions, and false notions, and unnecessary verbiage, and failure to hit—that also crept in, in spite of all the learning of Johnson, and all his research, and all his exhausting care. Able as he was, concentrated as he could make himself, he could only go as far as the knowledge of his day had gone; he could only see as far as his human eyes would let him see. So he omits predilection, respectable, bulky, mimetic, isolated, mimical, decompose, &c., of accident; he shall not put in, he says of purpose, such words as Socinian, Calvinist, Mahometan; as greenish, and the family of ish; as vileness, or any ending in ness; as dully, or any ending in ly; such are not wanted. John Ash, a close successor of his, and a very blundering copyer, as Phillips was of Blount, is received as a lexicographical joke always, because, whilst writing such things as 'Bihovac, rather an incorrect spelling for biovac," and for not giving the right word, Bivouac, at all, he puts down "Esoteric (adj.), an incorrect spelling for exoteric, which see." But Johnson had not esoteric or exoteric, either. Science had not advanced sufficiently to make those words required for her vocabulary; or else he forgot them. Johnson thought, also, it was philology to write down "Exciseman, from excise and man;" and "Feather-bed, from feather and bed;" and "Looking-glass, from look and glass," and so forth. It seemed expedient to him, too, as an example, to say of network (after philologising it very helpfully, from net and work), "anything reticulated or decussated at equal distances, with interstices between the intersections." It never occurred to him that reticulate and decussate, and interstice and intersection, would each one require as much searching for as network, and, being four words for one, would give four times the trouble. Then there was that class of definitions he would never consent to have expunged, of which excise is a well-known illustration. "Excise," he wrote, "a hateful tax levied upon commodities, and adjudged not by the common judges of property, but wretches hired by those to whom excise is paid." After remarking which, Johnson's immense work, laden to the margins with its glorious quotations, has also to be hoisted up on to the shelves—taking a heavy lurch to do it,—and Johnson's work has, very reluctantly, to be let go.

He had successors of all sorts, in shoals. They have counted 20, 40, 60, 80, 100, and more. There was Buchanan—to touch one or two of

the most notable, here and there. There was Johnston, particular in his pronunciation, and getting (for one) Sirrah pronounced Serra, whilst his contemporaries insisted it should be Sarra. There was Kenrick, the originator of the *London Review*, and the libeller of Garrick. There was Entick. There was Perry. There was Nares. There was Sheridan, telling his public to say Wen'z-da, and Skee-i, and Skee-i-lark, and Ghee-arden, and Ghee-ide, and so on: he being sure of his position because he had read three or four hours a day to Swift, had heard Chesterfield and the Duke of Dorset speak, and knew pronunciation had been uniform in the time of Queen Anne, and had only been defaced by "the advent of a foreign family," viz., of course, the Hanoverian line. There was Walker, saying (on Sheridan's report), how Swift used to jeer the people who called the wind winn'd, by "I have a great minn'd to finn'd why you pronounce it winn'd," and how he was met by the retort, "If I may be so boold, I should be glad to be toold why you pronounce it goold." There was Scott. There was George Mason, raving about Johnson's "uniform monotony of bombast;" his "ridiculous blunders" exceeding 4,300; his "numberless literary transgressions;" his "culpable omissions;" with his own splendid renunciation, on his own part, of the wish to "plunder poor Johnson of his multifarious literary infamy;" with his ugly little phrase that "the *Rambler* is an article I should be most ashamed to own the penning of." There was Jodrell. There was Richardson, proclaiming Johnson's *Dictionary* "a failure, his first conceptions not commensurate to his task, and his subsequent performance not even approaching the measure of his original design;" proclaiming himself—no!—saying, "he may be arraigned for a vainglorious estimate of himself," whilst it is quite clear he thinks too-glorious an estimate every way impossible. There was Todd. There were Webster and Worcester; American, both; remarkable, in their early days, for so much quarrelling, that a hillock of pamphlets carried on the strife for months, setting down testimonials, anti-testimonials, advertisements, amounts of sales, narratives, &c.; and giving opportunity to Dr. Worcester to say of some of Dr. Webster's words, "it has been my intention scrupulously to avoid them. . . . You coined them, or stamped them anew, to enrich or embellish the language. . . . They are Ammony, Bridegroom, Canail, Leland, Naivty, Nightmar, Prosopopy" (and more). . . . "I am willing that you should for ever have the entire and exclusive possession of them."

This is enough. There is conception by now, perhaps, of the mass of Dictionaries there is for the student to roam amongst; and the giddy bewilderment likely to come from the consultation of column after column of them, of page after page, of author after author pressing into notice by the lively score. It shall be concluded that this is so. What, then, will be the giddiness of bewilderment when there is the announcement, now, by way of conclusion, that there is no Dictionary of the English language in existence as yet at all? It will sound prodigious; it will

sound stupendous ; it will sound of the sort that will entail a reference to a Dictionary at once (any one will do ; that one nearest at hand) to try and select a word that shall fitly express absurdity or the wildest intrepidity. Yet this will only be—until there is consideration. What—as a beginning of such consideration—have all these Dictionaries, into which this has been a peep, amounted to ? There has been ignorance, in many, when they are touched on the score of utility (their *raison d'être*), not charm of reading ; there has been superfluosness ; there has been folly ; there have been errors, and omissions, and plagiarisms, and personal warpings, and irrelevant detail, that make up as curious a chapter in literary history as is anywhere to be found. And what, on the other hand—to consider more—is it clear by now that a Dictionary ought to be ? The Philological Society, at the instigation of Archbishop (then Dean) Trench, so long ago as 1857, essayed to answer this question. Its members decided to sound, and dig, to lay deep and sure foundations, for a Dictionary that should include all English words, in all centuries, in all meanings, with a quotation to support each of these in each and every stage—a quotation, moreover, with book, chapter, and verse appended, that it might, for all time, be open to verification. They called upon all lovers of the English language to aid them in collecting these quotations from all English books. They appealed to all who were competent, and who felt the impulse to be more than mere collectors, to aid them in arranging these countless quotations ; in combining them into word groups, and special sense groups, and chronological series, ready for an editor's manipulation. Then they saw that an editor, like a master-architect, could build upon this broad and enduring foundation ; could combine, and harmonise, and complete, all these conspiring efforts ; could rear aloft upon them at length the fair fabric of the Dictionary that ought to be. It was a proud scheme. It would result in a complete history of each word, it was seen—and intended. The birth would be shown, the growth, the death—where death had come. Clearly, up to the date of the publication of such a Dictionary, the English language, without bias, would have representation through and through ; also, after the date of such a publication, the further additions of further centuries to the English language would only need interpolation, in edition after edition, to let the complete representation evermore go on. But adverse circumstances arose : the first-nominated editor—enthusiastic, brilliant, loveable—Herbert Coleridge, died. The shock to the nascent Dictionary was sharp and severe ; and though Mr. Furnivall, zealous in forming the Early English Text Society, the Chaucer and other societies—founding them chiefly that the welfare of the Dictionary might be promoted—did all that was in his power to keep the work heartily in hand, there came a chill to the warm spread of it, and it almost burnt down. Happily this depression is past. It was only momentary, to lead to better energy and better consolidation ; it was only till there had been sufficient recovery to look at the undertaking anew ; and now that the

Philological Society has secured the acceptance of its plan by the University of Oxford—has secured its execution at the cost and with the typographical resources of the University press—now that, in its late president, Dr. Murray, it possesses once more a master-builder especially competent to the mighty task, and willing to give his life to its completion, there can be no possible fear felt as to the result. At his call, 800 volunteers have united their efforts to complete the gleaning and garnering in of quotations; at his call, twenty scholars are lending their aid to rough-hew these into preparatory form, twenty more have placed their special knowledge at his service, in case of special need. The right spirit is in this method of attacking the subject, clearly. As a result, as much as two-thirds of the preliminary labour is announced as done. Further, twelve months hence Dr. Murray is in full hope that he will be able to present the first-fruits of work the seed of which, as has been seen, was sown a quarter of a century ago. And though all this, possibly, is too well known in literary circles, is attracting too much literary interest, to have made any reference necessary to it here, yet, whilst among the Dictionaries, it would have been *gauche*—it would have been even ungrateful—to have left it out.

Love and Pain.



I.

Love held to me a chalice of red wine
 Filled to the very brim;
 About the slender stem the clinging vine
 Was closely twined and round the jewelled rim;
 Love held to me a cup of blood-red wine,
 And made me drink to him.

Around, the desert of my life lay bare,
 A waste of reeds and sand,
 Love stood with all the sunlight in his hair,
 And yellow crocus blossoms in his hand;
 And all around the cruel scorching glare,
 The waste and thirsty land.

To his white feet the loose grey raiment hung,
 His flushed lips smiled on me,
 Across his pale young brow the bright curls clung.
 I would have fled, but lo! I might not flee,
 While through the heavy air thy clear voice rung,
 And bade me drink to thee.

I took the graven cup, my lips I set
 Close to the jewelled rim,
 And to Love's eyes there stole a faint regret,
 Then a bright mist made all the old world dim;
 And in the golden cloud our blind lips met,
 And I drank deep to him.

II.

O Love, among the orchard trees I lay,
 Spring grasses at my feet,
 The flickering shadows fell upon the way,
 The pale narcissus made the fresh air sweet;
 Among the blossoming orchard trees I lay,
 Waiting my Lord to greet.

Through the green woods the birds sang shrill and gay,
And then a sudden sound
Of coming feet, a glimpse of raiment grey,
And shaken blossoms falling to the ground;
Sweet was my dream of Love and Life and May,
And blossoms scattered round.

And swift towards me his light footsteps came:
O Love, I woke to see
Strange eyes upon me, dark with some spent flame,
So like to thine, O Love, and yet not thee:
Thine was his raiment, and he bore the name
Known but to Love and me.

The yellow crocus blossoms in his hand
Were crushed, and wan, and dead;
Lo, as a wanderer on an unknown strand
He stood beside me with discrowned head:
"Love comes not twice," he cried, "to any land,
But I am in his stead!"

He held to me a chalice of red wine
Filled to the very brim;
The twisted snakes about the tall stem twine
And closely coil around the jewelled rim;
He held to me a cup of blood-red wine,
And bade me drink to him.

"Love came, but never will he come again,
Drink thou to me;
Love did forsake, but I, his brother, Pain,
Will now for evermore abide with thee;
The dark earth-mist has gathered round us twain,
Drink thou to me!"

U. A. T.



TWO OF THE HOTEL SERVANTS CARRIED HER FATHER UP TO HIS ROOM.

A Grape from a Thorn.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE WIDOW'S RING.



THOUGH young people of both sexes think a good deal about love, they absolutely decline to consider its existence possible between persons of mature age. They admit that the contemporaries of their grandfathers and grandmothers may entertain a tender passion for *them*, and they have even been known to reciprocate it; but they flout the idea of those ancient people having a tenderness for one another. Hence I sometimes flatter myself, when I am inclined to flirt with some young person a third of

my age and undoubtedly three times as good-looking, that I am driven to that course of conduct from fear of ridicule. One must flirt with somebody; and though it would be more becoming to select a contemporary, I dare not do it, from dread of what the young folks will say, but pay my attentions to the prettiest girl I can find as a *pis aller*.

Miss Jennynge had no more idea that Mr. Josceline aspired to her mother's hand, when he accepted her invitation that evening, than that he had a design of possessing himself of the cast of her father's head, or of the collection of his photographs; though she herself would not have objected to becoming his wife for a few years, and the Hon. Mrs. George Emilius Josceline for ever. And that astute gentleman had possessed himself of this tender secret, which she believed to be hidden in her virgin bosom from every eye.

This knowledge, while it imposed upon him considerable difficulties, gave him a great advantage. He knew that any attention he paid to Anastasia would be set down by Mrs. Jennynge to his desire to avert her daughter's suspicions, while her daughter herself would take them *au sérieux*. The killing of two birds with one stone was a metaphor altogether too feeble for this masterly course of conduct. If Mr. Vernon had known of the position—which would have been excellent “copy” for him—he would have likened it to getting the self-same article accepted (and paid for) by *Punch* and the *Pulpit*.

“We’re so glad you’re come!” exclaimed Mrs. Jennynge, as she gave him her well-jewelled hand; “it is so thoughtful and kind of you.”

Thoughtful it might have been, though hardly in the sense in which Mrs. Jennynge intended it. The fact was, the excellent old lady was rather off her head with excitement, and used the first gracious terms that came into it; but the kindness was surely the other way, as Mr. Josceline hastened to say.

“It is very kind of you and your daughter,” he answered, “to take pity upon my loneliness.”

“We are lonely ourselves,” said Anastasia, “for now that Miss Josceline has gone there is no attraction for us in the ladies’ drawing-room. Mrs. Armytage is more intolerable than ever. You noticed, no doubt, how insolent she was at dinner; well, she has been in tears half the afternoon. Can you possibly guess why, Mr. Josceline?”

“Well, I should hope it was because she heard the rumour of your possible departure.”

“Not she,” said Mrs. Jennynge, at which somewhat blunt sally Mr. Josceline smiled as though it had been the subtlest of epigrams.

“Mrs. Armytage has found in a book from the circulating library,” continued Anastasia, “a passage which has affected her most distressingly.”

“Dear me; from one of the poets, no doubt,” said Mr. Josceline; “a delicate nature like hers must be easily unstrung by poetic suggestion.”

“What a wicked man you are!” smiled Mrs. Jennynge admiringly. “A little bird told me you could be very severe when you pleased, though I refused to believe it.”

It was evident from the colour that came into Anastasia’s face that she was the bird in question, but she pursued her narrative without taking any notice of this little digression.

“No, it was not a poetry book” (“Poetry book!” thought Mr. Josceline; “she’s worse than the other!”); “it was a paragraph from some work on natural history about the duration of life in animals. ‘The rhinoceros,’ she told us, ‘exists for ever so long, the alligator, except from over-eating itself, scarcely knows what it is to die, but the dog—the faithful dog—attains but rarely to twenty years of life.’ According to that

computation, her 'own sweet Fido,' as she calls him, has, it seems, only about fifteen years of existence before him, which has put her in a most dreadful state."

"No wonder," said Mr. Josceline; "fifteen years—why, it's a mere span." His tone was more cynical even than he intended, for he was thinking of "the probabilities" of the duration of his own existence.

"I had it on the tip of my tongue," continued Anastasia, "to ask the woman how long she expected to live herself."

"That would have been very rude, Statty," said Mrs. Jennynge reprovingly. "Don't you think so, Mr. Josceline?"

"Well, it would have been slightly personal, no doubt; but the temptation to one who possesses humour must, we must allow, have been considerable. Of the society, however, to be found in the ladies' drawing-room your daughter appears to be quite independent, if I may judge from these charming flowers. They are nature itself. I was afraid that it was an occupation that had died out with our young ladies—a lost art, like the green tint in painted windows and the exquisite old lace of——"

"They are *mine*!" interrupted Mrs. Jennynge, with modest triumph.

Considering that Mr. Josceline had heard all about this particular manufactory of wax flowers from Ella, the extremity of astonishment manifested in his features was most creditable to him. He looked from Mrs. Jennynge to her violets, and from her violets to Mrs. Jennynge, as though he were doubting which of them was wax, and which the lovely and odorous offspring of nature.

"It is miraculous!" he murmured.

What in reality, however, struck him as much more extraordinary, was the spectacle of Anastasia with her thumb in her mouth, which at this moment he beheld in the looking-glass. He was unaware, of course, that this was equivalent to the hoisting the drum in Admiral Fitzroy's signal system; but he saw by the lowering of her brow that a storm was brewing, and felt he had pushed his compliments to her mother too far. The human mind is able to bear a very considerable weight of personal flattery, but it is often impatient of a pennyweight when the flattery is addressed to a third person.

"I have often thought," said Mr. Josceline, musing, "that the combinations of which art is capable have never been sufficiently experimented upon. A picture was shown me the other day of the home garden of a noble friend of mine, with photographs of his family, reduced to the proper comparative size, sitting on the seats and in the arbours. The effect was a little stiff, but the idea seemed to me capable of development. Now why should not these exquisite flowers be made to form a foreground in some beautiful landscape, such as I see on yonder table?"

"It would spoil them both," said Anastasia curtly.

"Pardon me, my dear young lady," said Mr. Josceline, taking up the work of art in question and examining it with great minuteness, "we can—

not tell till we have tried. This is a very delicate specimen of the master indeed, and there is no doubt of the master ; it is a Birket Foster."

"Oh, dear no, that's mine," said Anastasia briskly.

"Yours ? You astound me !" ejaculated Mr. Josceline. "I took it for an original which you had set yourself to copy. Dear me ! If my Ella could only paint like this I should never venture to criticise. She told me that you were a most marvellous performer—but really this——"

"I think Anastasia has a natural gift for painting," observed Mrs. Jennynge.

"Natural gift, my dear madam ! It is genius. In your daughter's presence I dare not say what I think of it, and I am thought to have some little taste in these matters too. I am not one to praise, I hope, without discrimination. Now this again"—he took up another specimen—"has vigour and skill ; the trained hand and eye are very perceptible ; the execution perhaps is even better ; but the conception, the exquisite suggestiveness of the other, is wanting in it."

"Why, lor bless me !" exclaimed Mrs. Jennynge—"that's Mr. Felspar's. He left it for my daughter to copy. Didn't he, Statty ?"

"Yes, that is Mr. Felspar's," said Anastasia, her countenance beaming with pride and delight, but also, as was usual with her when excited, growing very red in the wrong places.

"Well, all I can say is," said Mr. Josceline with an air of conviction, "that in my opinion Mr. Felspar has very little to teach you, my dear Miss Jennynge. What admirable perspective ! How softly the distances are made to mingle ! This is an unexpected treat indeed."

The observation of course referred to the picture, but just at that moment the coffee was brought in, which made the application of the remark a little vague.

"Do you take cream or hot milk ?" observed Mrs. Jennynge anxiously. "It was very remiss in me, as I told you, not to have taken note of that."

"Indeed, my dear madam, it is very good of you even to profess an interest in my poor tastes and fancies. I take black coffee, thank you."

"Black coffee !" exclaimed Mrs. Jennynge regretfully. "I am afraid they have got nothing blacker than this in the house."

The visitor was here attacked by such a severe cough that it brought the water into his eyes.

"Mr. Josceline means, mamma," said Anastasia, in that tone of reproach she always used when her mother made a social mistake, "that he takes his coffee without milk or cream."

"La, now, I'd just as soon take a black dose," observed her mother, making a wry face.

"It is an acquired taste, no doubt," said Mr. Josceline gently. "We men are the slaves of habit."

"Ah, I know what that means," observed his hostess. "My poor dear Nathaniel always used to use those words in apology for taking something he was fond of, but which disagreed with him, or which he was

afraid I should find fault with, such as a glass of gin and water. If you want a cigarette, Mr. Josceline, pray take one. I don't at all object to smoke."

"You are an enchantress, Mrs. Jennynge," exclaimed Mr. Josceline, "and can read the innermost thoughts of us poor mortals."

"I think I understand the men," answered his hostess modestly. "Get Mr. Josceline a light, Statty."

"But are you sure *you* don't object to the smell of tobacco, Miss Anastasia?" inquired the visitor with solicitude.

"I like it," answered the young lady with enthusiasm. After that eulogium upon her water-colour drawings, she would have professed to like the smell of boiling cabbage-water, if that should have been the Hon. George Emilius Josceline's favourite tippie.

From that moment the visitor was on velvet; for such is the gracious influence of tobacco upon the cultivated mind that it strengthens us to endure the society of the tedious, while at the same time it so admirably matures and elevates the intelligence that we say nothing we ought not to say, unless we are quite convinced it would be gratifying to our audience. From that moment Mr. Josceline carried on his little game of three-handed battledore with comparative ease; he gave the shuttlecock to each, not indeed in turn, but after just such an interval as prevented her from growing impatient, while he contrived to convince the other that he was temporarily depriving her of it not willingly, but in order to allay the flame of jealousy, or to extinguish the spark of suspicion. There was one thing, however, which Mr. Josceline was very anxious to effect, but with all his art had hitherto failed to compass. He wished to get rid of Anastasia, and to find himself alone with Mrs. Jennynge. To turn a young lady out of her own drawing-room without assigning any reason for it except that she is *de trop*, is a very difficult operation, as many of us in our youth may have had cause to remember, and this difficulty is greatly increased if she is the rival in our affections with the remaining occupant of the apartment. It is humiliating to confess the failure of so great a diplomatist, but after a couple of hours of conversation Mr. Josceline had only succeeded in the very easy task of charming his hearers, and was as far off from the object with which he had sought their society as when he began.

"I am afraid I must be going," he said, "for though I could sit up all night in such society, I should suffer for it (as one suffers for all one's pleasures, alas!) to-morrow. Late hours for the present are forbidden to me."

"How one hates doctors!" observed Anastasia with a gentle sigh.

"It would be a mitigation of their severe sentence," continued the visitor, "if I might take that landscape of yours away with me—not to keep, of course."

"I am sure you are very welcome to it," said Anastasia earnestly.

Here an outbreak of jealousy might not without reason have been

expected from Mrs. Jennynge. On the contrary, that lady smiled her sweetest smile, and in her tenderest voice exclaimed: "No, my dear Anastasia, I cannot permit you to give Mr. Josceline that picture when you have the lovely Como landscape to give him instead; it would give him a much better impression of your talents."

"But the Como is upstairs, mamma," pouted Anastasia, "at the bottom of the trunk."

"Never mind. I am sure you will not grudge a little trouble for our friend Mr. Josceline; fetch it, darling."

As to woman's tact, I have always had my doubts about it, but in the way of duplicity towards one another they are peerless. By this admirable arrangement Mrs. Jennynge had secured her daughter's absence for full five minutes. The door had scarcely closed behind her ere Mr. Josceline took advantage of his long-sought opportunity.

"In Miss Anastasia's presence," he said in his most dulcet tones, "I could hardly ask you the question, my dear Mrs. Jennynge, which has been trembling on my lips."

Mrs. Jennynge murmured in an affrighted tone, "Dear me, what question?" and put on the same expression, as nearly as she could recall it, which she had worn when her lost mate, or rather her penultimate, had demanded her virgin hand, more than a quarter of a century ago. And here it was that Mr. Josceline's experience failed him. He did not understand—what was the actual fact—that the widow was awaiting an offer of marriage there and then. He expected a little more delay and coquetry; and, though he meant to make his approaches very rapidly, it had not entered his mind to carry the widow's heart by a *coup de main*. One loses many things by over-refinement, though not often, as in this case, 5,000*l.* a year.

"I was going to ask you," he went on with gentle tenderness, "whether the report of your departure from the Ultramarine had really any foundation in fact. I heard it spoken of at the *table-d'hôte*, of course, but something within me bade me hope that there might be some mistake. The tidings seemed too sad—I had almost said too terrible—to be believed."

"What can it signify to anybody, dear Mr. Josceline," returned the widow, with tender melancholy, "whether a poor forlorn creature like myself goes away or stops?"

"I don't know as to *anybody*," replied Mr. Josceline; "I can only answer for myself. To me your departure would be a misfortune indeed."

"Do you really wish me to stay, then, a little longer? Really?" and the widow modestly lowered her eyes, and gave her hand a well-practised turn which exposed a bouquet of diamonds.

"I do. I implore it," whispered Mr. Josceline eagerly.

"Then I remain," she answered. "Hush, here's Anastasia," and she drew her fingers back from Mr. Josceline's tender grasp with such

celerity that she actually left one of her rings in his hand. Even the temporary acquisition of such an article under such peculiar circumstances would have been a source of embarrassment to some people; but Mr. Josceline merely slipped it into his waistcoat pocket with one hand, while he took "the Como" from Anastasia with the other.

"This is indeed a masterpiece," he said, and then fell into an art-ecstasy; a performance which to him was as easy as stroking a cat.

"And am I really to keep it?" he inquired, as he rose to take his departure.

"By all means," said Anastasia delightedly; "let me put it up in paper for you."

In the rustle which this proceeding occasioned, the widow contrived to whisper, "And you will keep *my* little gift too," in Mr. Josceline's ear.

"I have given a ring or two away in my time," reflected that gentleman when he found himself in his own apartment, "and in each case with a certain significance attaching to it. But I don't remember any one having given *me* an 'engaged ring' before; and it's not leap year, neither. However, the lady's booked, which is a great relief—my poor dear Ella."

CHAPTER XXIV.

A CHANGE OF VIEWS.

ON the evening of the same day on which Mr. Josceline and his daughter had visited Clover Cottage, Mrs. Gammer brought her two lodgers the tidings of little Davey's illness. The young men were greatly distressed by it, for the child was a favourite with them both; and Felspar at once went up to the hotel to volunteer his services as sick nurse, which Vernon would also have done but that the state of his wounded hand for the present rendered him useless for such a post. Felspar's assistance was of course declined, since the two ladies were already installed as nurses; and, as Mrs. Armytage cynically observed, "It would hardly have done to turn the Prior's House into an Agapemone." From inquiries made at the doctor's, it seemed that nothing was known for certain as to the nature of the illness; but among the little world of Wallington Bay it was represented, of course, as most alarming. Though some well-meaning attempts have been made of late years to discourage "sensation," they have not been wholly successful; and I am inclined to think that there is something in human nature itself which welcomes the thing, and has always done so, though of old it may have gone under some other name. With those who live dull, uneventful lives, in particular, anything out of the common way is attractive, even if it be a misfortune, provided only, of course, that it has not happened to themselves.

In Felspar's absence, Mrs. Gammer discoursed to his friend upon the topic with much satisfaction, and dwelt with unction upon the very gloomiest view of the case. "After all, Mr. Walter, we must all die, young or old; it don't much matter, for it is only a question of a year or two."

"My dear Mrs. Gammer," said Vernon, "you speak like a philosophical work, but even philosophy may be overdone. It would make me very uncomfortable, for example, to think you yourself would only live a year or two, and little Davey is much younger than you."

"That's true, Mr. Vernon; and though, thank Heaven, I never have an ache or a pain, I don't feel so much of a permanency as I did."

The term permanency in her mouth was characteristic; her calling coloured her whole existence; man, in her eyes, seemed not so much a tenant for life as a lodger, more or less liable to quit at a moment's notice.

"But these little people are soon up, as well as soon down," urged Vernon cheerfully.

"Ah, but, mind you, the poor child is delicate, and a very bad subject for a disease of any kind. Fever, they say, comes from drains, as is like enough; for my part I don't hold with these new-fangled inventions—sanitaries and what not; and there have been no drains in Warrington to my knowledge, and, until this present one, no fevers either. Now in Lawton—for I ha' been there scores o' times and smelt it—they've got what they call a sewage system, and the consequence is, mumps is never out of the place. What I was going to say is, that fevers and drains is very much alike; you never know, as any landlady will tell you, if once you begin them, when you come to the end of drains; and it's the same with fevers, we can hardly expect that the mischief will stop with poor little Davey. There's poor Miss Josceline——"

"There's nothing the matter with Miss Josceline, surely?" interrupted Vernon, taking his pipe from his mouth (a sure sign with him of great perturbation of mind).

"Not yet; but she's volunteered to nurse the child, and is shut up with him and the nurse, and Mrs. Wallace, and Mr. Aird; they are all together, they tell me, in the Prior's House, as in a galantine; so I reckon they must be keeping pretty close."

"In quarantine, you mean, Mrs. Gammer. Well, of course it's right to cut them off from the rest of the people in the hotel; but, dear me, though it is just like her kind heart, how very rash of Miss Josceline to volunteer for such a duty."

"Well, I don't know as to that, Mr. Vernon; it is just as rash of Mr. Felspar, and I must say a little selfish too, for if he was took with the fever, there's a lodger gone from Clover Cottage. After all, it's woman's work, is nussing, and I should think Miss Josceline would be the very one for it."

"Why?"

"Well, she's gentle in her ways, and cheerful, and she won't go trapesing and trailing along the floors, as Miss Jennynge do, with that precious train of hers; why, that young woman couldn't stoop, not over a pillow, to give a drop of medicine to a body, or what not, for fear of busting her stays. Then there's Mrs. Armitage—she'd be no sort of use in a sick-room, I reckon; to have a will of your own is one thing, but she's too masterful; she'd take her own way with the patient (if she took him in hand at all, which I doubt), in spite of what the doctor might say; but Miss Josceline, she's of another sort, tractable, and gentle, and yet with plenty of sense. One can see that with half an eye."

"Mrs. Gammer," said Vernon, "you were saying the other day you would like a set of the *Mayfair Keepsake* for your parlour bookshelf; how would you like it bound?"

"Lor, sir, I never said it serious, but only because you seemed to take to it so much yourself; and on wet days, when they've got no books, lodgers is so trying. 'If Mr. Vernon likes it, being such a judge,' says I, 'it must be first-class reading; and then there are the pictures.'"

"The *Keepsake* has some excellent things in it, no doubt," returned Vernon. "You shall have a copy of it next week, Mrs. Gammer, because—because you're a good woman."

"You're very kind, I'm sure, to say so, Mr. Walter," said the landlady, the usual peony tint of her complexion assuming the hue of beetroot. "It's a comfort I'm sure, in this world, when one finds one's efforts to do one's duty appreciated, and more especially by one's lodger."

Vernon, however, did not hear her; he was wrapped in thought: the question of blue and gold, or green and gold, as a binding for the *Keepsake*, was perhaps agitating his mind; so his companion believed, and, being a woman of much judgment in practical matters, she left him to his reflections.

Mr. Felspar had little to tell his friend with which we are unacquainted, and he found the task of breaking to him the fact of Ella's voluntary exposure to the danger of infection much easier than he had anticipated. Vernon remarked that to hear of such an act of self-sacrifice was only what he had expected, which, considering that he was already acquainted with the circumstances, was very true. The comparative coolness with which he received the news was so far satisfactory to his friend that it convinced him he had taken the right course in not communicating to Vernon what Mr. Josceline had told him respecting Ella's position and prospects. It would be time enough to do that should Vernon's intentions prove more serious. He could not, however, help contrasting the shock which the news of Miss Josceline's quixotic conduct had produced upon himself, when Mrs. Trant had informed him of it, with the quiet manner in which Vernon had received it. It was the

privilege of the young, who find women at their feet, he reflected bitterly, to be philosophic.

Yet all that night Vernon tossed sleeplessly in his bed, fevered, not with his wound, but with anxieties and forebodings founded on those careless words dropped by Mrs. Gammer, "One can hardly expect that the mischief will stop with little Davey." He pictured Ella, like some idealised Miss Nightingale, devoting herself to the case of her little patient till contagion struck her down, and health, and perhaps life itself, were sacrificed on the altar of devotion. As for Mr. Josceline permitting his daughter to undertake such a task, he could find no sort of explanation of it; unless he was so inordinately selfish that nothing awoke his fears that did not imperil his own personal safety, the man must be mad. Even Mr. Felspar, though he had so much more data to draw conclusions from, did not guess Mr. Josceline's real motive in thus acting; indeed he did not imagine that he had any motive at all, but set down his conduct to sheer carelessness, and a dislike to contemplate serious possibilities.

Directly after breakfast the next morning, Mr. Felspar repaired to the hotel to make inquiries. He found things pretty much as they were. The little patient had passed an uneasy night; but no fresh symptoms had declared themselves. Of course none of the party in quarantine were visible, and, having obtained what information he could from Mrs. Trant, the painter was passing out on his road home when Mrs. Jennynge beckoned him in from her window. She was generally much at her ease with Felspar, whom, being poor, she naturally regarded as a person of no consequence, and also as being for the present, at least, in her employment; but on this occasion he noticed that she wore a look of some embarrassment, and that her tone was one of unwonted affability and conciliation. On repairing to her sitting-room he found Mrs. Jennynge alone, seated at her usual table by the window, where the manufactory of wax flowers was carried on, and in the act of designing a blush rose. If he had recollected that, as a rule, she devoted her artistic talents to flowers of the funereal sort only, this fact would have been significant; but, as it was, it escaped his attention. He inquired after his pupil, Miss Anastasia, and was told she had gone out for a constitutional.

"The fact is," added Mrs. Jennynge, with a nervous giggle, "I was rather glad of it, since her absence gives me an opportunity of speaking to you a few words in private."

"In private?" echoed Mr. Felspar, in an astonished tone.

The lady's colour was high, her voice timid if not tender, and her whole manner what the vulgar term flustered. Taking all this in connection with the manipulation of the blush rose, the painter was a little alarmed. He was not naturally more conceited than most of us—indeed he was less so; but it did strike him (with a shiver), for one passing instant, that Mrs. Jennynge had fallen in love with him, and was about to make him an offer of marriage.

"Yes, on business," she continued, "if that can be called such which has been a labour of love with you, as you have told us all your work is."

"Oh, I see, the portrait," interposed Felspar. It was impolite of him to interrupt her, but the sense of relief he experienced had been considerable, and the observation escaped him involuntarily.

"Yes, the portrait of my late husband." (He noticed that she did not say as usual, when referring to that departed saint, "my lost Nathaniel.") "It is unpleasant to have to say so, Mr. Felspar, but the likeness does not give me satisfaction."

"Indeed! Of course these things are a matter of opinion, Mrs. Jennynge," replied the painter quietly, "but certainly not a week ago you expressed your entire approval of it."

"Did I? Then I think that must have been merely to spare your feelings."

Mr. Felspar smiled an amused smile, which spoke a volume: it seemed to say, "From what I know of your character, madam, that seems to me in the highest degree improbable."

She knew what the smile meant well enough, for the flush of embarrassment gave way at once to the deeper flush of anger.

"Well, at all events I don't like it now," said she bluntly.

"What's the matter with it?" inquired Mr. Felspar coolly, drawing back the curtain that concealed the picture standing on its easel. It struck him that some accident had happened to it, which might have induced a lady with a keen eye for her own advantage, such as he knew Mrs. Jennynge to be, to wish to cancel or amend her agreement. But there it stood as he had left it, not, perhaps, so idealised a presentment of her "lost Nathaniel" as the widow might have desired, but undoubtedly a good likeness so far as it went, and it was almost finished.

"It is neither this nor that which is the matter," said Mrs. Jennynge, regarding the portrait with marked disfavour; "it does not suggest to me the late Mr. Jennynge at all." Then, as if conscious that she had not expressed his relationship to her very pathetically, she added, in a tone broken by emotion, "I miss the smile; I miss the voice."

"The smile, madam," said Felspar coldly, "I can, if you please, make more pronounced, though it does not appear in the original; but as to the voice, that is certainly beyond me. A painter seldom succeeds in delineating the speech."

The contemptuousness of his tone was extreme, and his companion felt it. It did not shame her, but it convinced her that she had started on the wrong tack; she had been wrong in supposing that the artist could be bullied.

"My dear Mr. Felspar," she said, "do not let us dispute upon this matter, which after all, as you have said, is one of mere opinion. You are satisfied, it seems, but I am not. Our arrangement was, I think, that I was to pay you a hundred pounds—fifty pounds on the completion

of the sketch, which sum you have already received, and fifty pounds on the completion of the oil painting."

"Which will be finished in three or four days at most," observed Mr. Felspar quietly.

"I don't know about that, I'm sure, but I don't want it finished at all."

"Oh, I see. I have heard something of your intention to leave Wallington Bay, but instead of telling me of it in a straightforward manner, and asking to be off your bargain, you wish to find an excuse for dissatisfaction with my work."

The speech was certainly far from conciliatory, but there was one thing in it which mitigated its severity to the person addressed. Mrs. Jennynge was relieved to find that Mr. Felspar attributed her change of views to her proposed departure from the hotel—an intention which, as we know, she had abandoned.

"Well," said she naïvely, and without an attempt to resent his imputation, "it seems hard to pay for a thing we don't want, doesn't it?"

"I might retort, madam," answered Felspar, his words falling slowly and coldly, like the droppings from an icicle, "that it seems also hard to have had to do work for nothing. But I am not in the habit of bargaining about my pictures. The law would award me the full amount agreed upon, since I am ready to fulfil my part of our contract; but I am content to waive my rights."

"And to charge me nothing?" exclaimed Mrs. Jennynge, in a tone less of gratitude than of expectancy.

"Nothing."

"Now I call that handsome," said Mrs. Jennynge admiringly; "very handsome. I have often heard of the generosity of Art, and so on, but I never believed it. Mr. Felspar, you are a gentleman."

Mr. Felspar looked at her with an inquiring glance, as though he would have said, "How should *you* know?" but the implied sarcasm flew over her head: she only felt that she had made an excellent bargain.

"I am sure, my dear sir," she continued effusively, "we part the best of friends. Any further lessons, by-the-by, you may be good enough to give my daughter must be no longer given *as* a friend. I must insist upon your being remunerated for them."

"But I thought you were going away?" said Mr. Felspar.

"To be sure, I forgot that," said Mrs. Jennynge, for the first time looking really abashed. "Our departure, however, is not quite certain."

Mr. Felspar, to intimate that there were no doubts on that point in his own case, took up his hat. He was about to leave her, with a distant bow, when she stopped him.

"I again repeat you have behaved most nobly, Mr. Felspar; but about the cheque?"

"What cheque?"

"Well, the fifty pounds. I mean, of course, the first fifty. You will send it back to me, I conclude, in the course of the day. We *may* be leaving the hotel, and at all events, as my poor husband used to say, 'short settlements make long friends.'"

"I wish your husband was alive, madam, and acting towards me as you have done. Then I could tell him what I thought of his behaviour. As you are a lady, that is unfortunately impossible."

"Do you mean to say you are going to keep that first fifty, after all?"

"Most decidedly I am. If I was as rich as you, and you were as poor as I, I should doubtless return it to you as a free gift, but, as it is, I should as soon think of making over to you my last year's income. Good morning, madam."

"I don't think much of artists," murmured Mrs. Jennynge when he had left the room. "However, I have got half the money back, which was more than was to be expected." Then she took the picture off the easel and placed it on the floor with its back to the wall. The model of her lost Nathaniel after death had been already stowed away out of sight, and now she collected his photographs and put them without much ceremony into the table-drawer. Having thus cleared the apartment of all the touching mementoes of the departed, she returned with a sigh of relief to the construction of the blush rose which she intended for the Hon. George Emilius Josceline.

CHAPTER XXV.

IN QUARANTINE.

THE sharp contrasts of which the world is full are sharpest, not between rich and poor, I think (though, Heaven knows, those are clearly defined enough), but between the hale and the sick. It is true that riches may be on the side of the healthy, and poverty on that of the poor, in which case the question of compensation becomes (to the unphilosophic mind) importunate indeed; but there is no need for our present purpose to come face to face with that. There was difference enough between the mode of life pursued by the tenants of the *Ultramarine* in general, and that of that portion of them cut off from the rest by the double doors which divided it from the Prior's House or Hostel. In the one case there was Mr. Josceline wooing and winning; Mrs. Jennynge, in an Indian summer of rapture; and Miss Anastasia, beginning to suspect what was going on, and something more than disgusted at somebody's conduct—which, however, was a mystery to her. Mr. Josceline's arrival with four horses had effected even more than he had given them credit for; they had put it beyond all question that he had the means suitable to his birth, and "What on earth he could see in her mamma?" was the inquiry Miss Jennynge was for ever naturally putting to herself. She was not

absolutely jealous of her mother, for though she would have had no objection to become the Hon. Mrs. Josceline herself, her affections were not involved in the matter; but she said to herself privately that "there was no fool like an old fool," and that Mr. Josceline must be "mad." Otherwise, being a judicious young woman in most matters relating to her own interest, she made no fuss about it, and even pretended not to see what was going on. Mrs. Jennynge had told the simple truth when she said that her daughter was absolutely dependent on her; and therefore it behoved Anastasia to keep her suspicions to herself, though as time went on they became amply corroborated. The absence of her late papa's photograph from the parlour wall, and the disappearance of the cast of his countenance, had been significant enough; but now she noticed a certain ring upon Mr. Josceline's finger about which there could be no question, except how in the world her mother, being much afflicted with rheumatism in the joints, could ever have slipped it over her knuckles. Also, though secrets are said to lie under the rose, there was a blush rose in wax in Mr. Josceline's sitting-room, which, so far from concealing anything from Miss Anastasia, told her everything.

Mrs. Armytage, however, knew nothing of what was taking place; but since, for Mrs. Jennynge's sake, Mr. Josceline had once or twice taken up the cudgels against her, the Professor's wife had grown bitter against him, and even described his "goings on" as disgraceful. Indeed, partly to conceal his profounder designs, but also because flirtation was natural to him, Mr. Josceline did, in his daughter's absence, make himself exceedingly agreeable, not only to Anastasia, who only pretended to like it, but to Mrs. Percival Lott, who liked it very much.

In the Prior's Hostel, if there was no flirtation, there was a great deal of reciprocal affection of another kind. Mr. Aird, when not at his post by little Davey's pillow, could never sufficiently exhibit, though more by his manner than his words, his sense of the generous kindness of the two ladies who, at such inconvenience, and even peril, to themselves, had undertaken to nurse his beloved child; and the two women loved one another, and the little patient clung to both of them (though always most to Ella), and drew their hearts more and more closely to him every day. The fever had not abated, though, as Dr. Cooper remarked of it, it ought to have done so; the more dangerous symptoms had disappeared, but the child's rest was broken and uneasy, and he awoke from his slumbers unrefreshed. The immediate cause of this was nightmare. In the middle of the night, he would wake up shrieking and pointing to the foot of his bed, where, as he said, stood a spectre. This ridiculous idea was, of course, combated by all about him, but without effect, and the incident had occurred twice. The ayah had always slept in his room. On the first night Ella had remained with him till nearly midnight, when she had been relieved at her post by Mrs. Wallace, and on the second the latter lady had remained till the

attack, if such it could be called, took place. She protested with much energy that she had never closed an eye, but Davey had whispered to Ella that both his nurse and Mrs. Wallace were asleep, and had been awakened by his crying out, but too late to see the "dark man." Upon the personal appearance of this gentleman, so vaguely described, it was thought best not to question him, but they all agreed that it was either some reminiscence of the mild Hindoo that haunted the child's dreams, or some fancied metamorphosis of Abra herself. Neither of the two ladies was in the least given to superstition, and though, as it afterwards turned out, Mr. Aird himself had a very pronounced taste for the horrible, he had never developed it in their presence. Ella suggested that the little patient should change his room, whereat Dr. Cooper only shrugged his shoulders: "That could be done, of course," he meant to imply, "but the dark man was no more to be evaded by that means than the black care which sits behind the horseman is to be shaken off by a change of steed."

"Well, it is my watch to-night," said Ella, "and we will try it once more." And she used the word "watch" with a meaning; for she was secretly resolved not to go to sleep at all.

Her proper place was in that too comfortable arm-chair in which (as Ella shrewdly suspected) Mrs. Wallace had succumbed to the seductions of Morpheus; but no sooner were the three settled for the night, and Abra, as usual, had fallen fast asleep, than the child besought Ella to lie down beside him—"Then I shall not fear," he said, "even if the dark man comes again."

He had made this request once before, when she had been keeping a shorter watch by his bedside; but she had persuaded him not to press it. Dr. Cooper had told her that to sleep with the child would be to "fly in the face of Providence"; for, if any mischief was really brewing, she would in that case be certain to suffer from it. But on this occasion the little fellow's appeal was so urgent, and his apprehensions so obvious, that she consented. Though she had never been troubled in that way herself, she had known imaginative girls at school to suffer much from nervousness at night, and her tender heart at once melted within her; and when, as soon as little Davey's arms were round her neck and his fears at rest, he sank into a tranquil slumber, she felt that she had already had her reward.

As she lay very quiet, for fear of disturbing him, her thoughts wandered over her past life, and, as usual, reverted to the mother whom she had never known, and had been tacitly forbidden to speak of. Had she herself, she wondered, when a little child, much younger than Davey, ever lain in loving arms, and been rocked to sleep on a mother's bosom? A dim recollection of a house with a porched door, that looked out upon flowers and shrubs, was all that remained to her of her first home. While still of very tender years she had been transferred to Miss Steele's care, at Minerva House, where no reference to her past had ever been made.

The girls—indeed, several batches of whom had come and gone in her time—had occasionally asked her questions upon that point; but, as it was manifest that she could not gratify their curiosity, the subject was soon dropped. When Davey got well she made up her mind on the first opportunity to endeavour to learn from her father what he could tell her of her own childhood; that was how she put it, even to herself. There was something in his studied reticence concerning his wife that forbade her to seek for information more directly. If even he would speak of his own past, she would not feel herself so utterly bereft of all ties of association. It was the absence of these, perhaps, that caused her mind to revert with interest to recent events, and made her exaggerate the claims of mere acquaintanceship. But presently she fell to thinking of Mr. Felspar, who had been so kind to her in regard to her drawing; and then upon Mr. Vernon. Perhaps it was their common affection to her present little companion that induced it; but her thoughts, having arrived at the young poet, dwelt there. What a pleasant face he had, and what a natural and charming manner! How Mr. Aird seemed to like him, and how devoted his friend Felspar was to him! Even his landlady, Mrs. Gammer, had spoken of him, when they called at the cottage, with affectionate enthusiasm. It must be a warm and honest heart that thus attracted every one towards it. Her father, though such a favourite with society, seemed to excite admiration rather than affection in his fellow-creatures, which was no doubt to be accounted for by that very reserve which restricted the demonstration of her own love for him; but Mr. Vernon had the faculty of evoking personal regard. It was fortunate; for, as it happened, he was as destitute of family ties as herself. Open as the day, he had made no secret of the fact that he was alone in the world, and had to win his own way in it. It was but natural that the similarity of their positions in this respect should invest him, in her eyes, with an additional interest. She pictured him, to herself, growing in fame, and worthy of the reputation he was acquiring. Then her thoughts strayed to her own little picture; and would it, or would it not, she wondered, be thought worthy of the honours of print? and, if it should have that good fortune, how pleasant it would be for it to appear side by side with Mr. Vernon's poem! and what a charming souvenir it would form of her visit to Wallington Bay, and of the kind friends she had found there! When she met Mr. Vernon, in after-years, he might be a great man; but she was sure he would not have forgotten her, because of that incident of the illustration, and——

"Ella! Ella!" whispered Davey, in hushed and frightened tones, "there he is!"

"There *who* is, my darling?" she answered tenderly. "You are dreaming."

"No, no! I saw him quite plainly!" insisted the child, with beating heart. "If I dared to look up I should see him again, in his cloak, at the foot of the bed."

Ella strained her eyes in the direction indicated. There was a night-lamp in the room, which gave a tolerable light, but insufficient to make things distinct. "Abra! Abra!" she cried.

With a grunt and a snort the Asiatic awoke. "What is it, Missee Ella?"

"Light the candles. You see, my dear Davey, there is nothing here."

"I saw him!" answered the child, his large eyes roving apprehensively over the room. "He stood there—just there—in his long cloak. Papa says it's like a girl to be frightened; but I can't help it."

"Of course you can't; nobody is frightened who can help it. You shall change your room to-morrow, Davey, I promise you that; and we will keep the candle alight for the rest of the night. Now you will go to sleep again, like a good boy."

"'Es I will, dear Ella."

She folded him in her arms, and in a few minutes slumber once more overtook him; but Ella remained awake. It might have been fancy—indeed it was folly to suppose otherwise—yet she thought she had seen a vague something at the bed-foot when the child had first cried out. What it was she could not describe; but something with some dim resemblance to a human figure had grown shadowy and disappeared under her gaze. It gave her, she knew not how, the impression of having been more distinct before her attention was called to it. Such delusions have happened to many of us, and, most commonly, when the mind has been disturbed and thrown out of gear by unwonted circumstances. In an ancient portion of an ancestral mansion, cut off from wholesome life, it was not unlikely that an imaginative young girl should have thus partaken of the fevered fancies of her patient. That this would be the view of others, at least, Ella had the good sense to perceive; and what weighed with her much more was the conviction that the revelation of what she had seen, or thought she had seen, would only increase existing troubles. She therefore said nothing about it to her companions, nor did she mention it in the daily letter which she wrote to her father describing, always with gaiety, how life went on in the Prior's Hostel; only, for the future, she took care that Davey's apartment should be occupied by Mr. Aird (whom she justly deemed to be ghost-proof), and *vice versa*.

It was curious, however, in spite of her prudent resolutions, how this strange incident affected not so much her spirits as her tone of thought, and, from unconscious sympathy, that of her companions. With the little patient, of course, they were always cheerful; but when alone, and not conversing about him, the topics of their talk became more serious, if not more sombre. Something was owing, no doubt, to the tightening bond of friendship, the tendency of which, among its other blessings, is to withdraw us from the commonplace, and to substitute for the froth of the wave the wave itself. When familiarity reaches a certain point we begin to trot out our hobbies, which may, or may not, be attractive

animals. Mr. Aird's was a hearse horse. He had a theory on suicide ; he thought that a man had a right to dispose of his own life, if in so doing it did not affect others injuriously. This was vehemently combated by Mrs. Wallace (whose views were mildly Evangelical) upon religious grounds.

"There's nothing against it in the Scriptures," persisted Mr. Aird. "What does Miss Josceline say ?"

"I don't think a soldier should leave his post before the battle is over," was the grave reply.

"Ah, that's the military view ; but then, you see, I am a civilian," answered Mr. Aird grimly. "Besides, I am supposing that he has no one to defend but himself."

Then he began to furnish instances from his own personal experience. One, in particular, of a husband he knew, who, having lost his only child, wrote in the fly-leaf of his Bible to his dead wife, "There is nobody left now ; I have seen all I love leave the earth before me, and I come to you to-night." They were very interesting stories ; but a trifle too much so for his audience, and especially under existing circumstances.

"My dear Mr. Aird, you make our flesh creep !" remonstrated Mrs. Wallace ; whereupon he desisted.

Finding the enemy reduced to silence, it was only natural that the lady should fire a last shot. "You argue," said Mrs. Wallace, "that, in the case of wicked people, the very best thing they can do is 'to take themselves off,' as you call it, since, in so doing, they do the world a service ; but how can you tell that if they lived on they would continue to be wicked ?"

"Because it is in accordance with experience," said Mr. Aird. "Don't you feel growing worse and worse yourself, now ?"

But Mrs. Wallace was not to be put off by jest. There is a secret drawer in most people's mind in which they keep their serious convictions ; Mr. Aird had touched it in her case, and out they came. "You have told us some strange experiences of your own life," she said ; "let me tell you one of mine. Years ago, when I was a little child, my father went to Exeter for a couple of days, on business, leaving no one in the farmhouse but my aunt Esther, and myself, and some female servants. As our house was in a lonely part of the country, and since burglaries had been recently committed in the neighbourhood, he had proposed, before he went, to leave us some male protector ; but my aunt had declined it. She always reminded me of what I have read of Cromwell's troops, being of great courage, and a piety such as I have never seen equalled ; only she had no harshness nor uncharitableness to others. She slept alone, in the next room to me, where, for safety's sake, in my father's absence, what little plate we had was kept in an oak chest. When she went to bed at night it was her custom (for I could hear her voice, and if I listened intently, which I was sometimes tempted to do, her very words) to pray aloud, not only for ourselves, but her fellow-

creatures. It was not her way to hope that a handful of human beings only, with herself and friends among them, should be saved, but the whole world, including even the wicked. She was a simple-hearted woman, in whom whatever chanced to come to her ears out of the common made a great impression, and on this occasion what my father had said about the late robberies committed by tramps in the district recurred to her mind. It was "borne in upon her," as she afterwards expressed it, to beseech the Divine compassion in favour of the houseless wretches constrained, perhaps by want as much as evil habit, to break through and steal. I heard her; and then, to my astonishment and alarm, I heard a faint cry of alarm, and then two voices. They spoke together for some time, and then I heard two persons leave the room; and, after a long interval (during which I lay in a state of great trepidation), my aunt returned, and said softly, through the door, 'Are you asleep, Cicely?' and I answered, 'No,' and she came in and told me what had happened.

"When she had risen from her knees, and was about to take off her dressing-gown, her eyes fell upon the valance of the bed, from beneath which looked out two other eyes, and on meeting her gaze the person who owned them dragged himself out. He was a man (as she described him) terrible to look upon, of herculean frame, and bloated face, travel-stained and in rags, with a pair of iron-tipped shoes in his hands, which he had taken off in order to reach his late hiding-place without noise; but his voice and manner were in strange contrast to these things.

" 'I came here to-night, lady, to rob your house,' he said. 'I have been lying beneath your bed for hours, rehearsing as to how it should be done, and resolved, if I met any resistance, to do worse than rob, for I am one that sticks at nothing. Then, all of a sudden, as I lay cursing your late hours, I heard you come in and read your Bible, all alone—a thing I have never done myself, except in my prison cell when I felt pretty sure that the chaplain's eye was at the keyhole.

" "Well, this is a pious old party," I says to myself, "but I hopes she won't be long." But when from your Bible you went to prayer, and after praying to God Almighty for your little niece, and this, that, and the other, you came, quite naturally like, to them as never say a word to Him for themselves, and amongst them even for downright bad ones, like me, then says I, "May I be damned if I takes a penny piece from her, or hurts a hair of her grey head." Then replied my aunt in her quiet gentle fashion, 'But why, unhappy man, need you be damned at all?'

"It had never struck the poor fellow, I suppose, that there had been any alternative for him, until she went on to explain it, but it is as true as I am sitting here that within five minutes this man was upon his knees repeating a prayer after her, just as a child might do at his mother's bidding. She afterwards took him downstairs and gave him some supper, of which he stood in great need, but of the money which

my aunt pressed upon him he only took a very little, in order, as he said, to keep him from present temptation and set him on an honest road. My aunt made me promise to say nothing of what she told me, lest the poor fellow should suffer for it, and we never heard of his getting into trouble again."

"That is a very curious story, no doubt," said Mr. Aird. "I won't be so ill-mannered as to say, as many people would, that it is possible your aunt caught sight of the man before she said her prayers, and framed them to suit his case; but I don't see how the narrative bears upon your argument that wicked people may be turned into good people. Though the man did not rob your aunt, he may have gone on robbing other people."

"Let me finish my story," said Mrs. Wallace, quietly. "Years afterwards, when my aunt, then near her end, was staying at Plymouth for the sake of the sea air, and I was with her, one Sunday morning 'a very moving preacher' was advertised to hold forth in a certain chapel; and though the attraction, I confess, was greater to my aunt than to myself, I volunteered to accompany her. The preacher was a large, ungainly man, looking more like a prize-fighter than a minister of the gospel; but his words had an impassioned earnestness which I have rarely heard, and which carried the congregation with them. We were too great a distance from him to see his features, but his voice reached every part of the crowded place. His theme was on the saving powers of grace, and in order to show that no man could be so fallen but that he might be raised up again, he evidenced an extreme case within his own experience. 'I knew a man once,' he said, 'who was a greater sinner than any here. He owned no Father in Heaven, no brother on Earth; his trade was robbery; by day he was a thief, and by night a house-breaker.'"

"'Oh, Aunt,' whispered I, 'did you hear that?'"

"'Yes, my dear,' she answered softly; 'that is the very man himself: I knew him directly I heard his voice.'"

"Then he went on, point by point, to describe what had happened on that eventful night at our home, and how that from the hour at which he had heard my aunt at her prayers he had become a new and honest man; which (to cut a long story short) we afterwards found on inquiry to be the case. He had a shoemaker's shop in the town, where for years he had been much respected. So you see, Mr. Aird, that wicked people need not always put an end to themselves in despair of becoming good."

"Unfortunately, my dear madam, they very seldom do," returned the old Indian drily; "my experience is that they remain to plague the good people as much as possible. But I am glad to find that your felonious friend had some other trade than sensational preaching, which is, in my opinion, no very great improvement upon burglary with violence."

It was thus that the little party in the Prior's Hostel conversed

together, on a footing more confidential and familiar than would have been possible had they been at large in the world without; and though there was no uniformity (and even, as we have seen, considerable disagreement) among them as to opinion, they were becoming close friends.

CHAPTER XXVI.

A CHANGE OF PATIENTS.

WE have been told by the lips of the wise that if we poor mortals knew what was going to happen to us—whether of good or ill—we should not find it an improvement; the nervous and despondent would, it is true, no longer make themselves miserable with imaginary sorrows, but the real ones would throw such a gigantic shadow before them as would make such men's condition even worse; while, on the other hand, the sanguine would be robbed of their hopes. The argument, no doubt, is a sound one, but nevertheless the unexpectedness of human life is one of its terrors. In the clearest sky, when all is sunshine, the clouds will hurry up from the most unlooked-for quarters, and the thunderbolt of misfortune falls; and again, when the clouds, as it would seem, have done their worst, and all has been so dark, so long, that some gleam of sunshine seems inevitable, the thunderbolt still falls. It is like luck at cards, which defies the doctrine of chances and puts the theory of probabilities to shame; and on the whole, or so it seems to us ungrateful mortals, it is such bad luck.

Little Davey's illness was blowing over, the fever was abating, and, what was better, losing its more dangerous features, so that Dr. Cooper was in two minds as to letting the party in the Prior's Hostel out of quarantine, when a pleasant surprise happened to two of them. The three were at breakfast together as usual (for the Doctor had made a point of their not taking their meals in the sick-room), when two little parcels came by post, one containing the prettiest gold watch and chain for Mrs. Wallace, and the other a sparkling locket for Miss Josceline.

"Goodness gracious!" cried the former simply, "this can surely never be for me; there must be some mistake."

But Ella, though greatly surprised, had no doubt as to who had sent the presents, for her locket was the facsimile in shape of the one she had picked up in Abbott's Creek. Of the value of its coat of diamonds she was wholly ignorant; but she at once understood that the intention of the donor was to express his twofold gratitude to her, first for the recovery of his wife's portrait, and secondly for her attendance on his child.

"Oh, Mr. Aird!" she cried with a grateful blush, "you are too kind. I have never seen anything so beautiful."

"I'm glad you like it, my dear young lady," replied the old gentleman, going on with his egg; "you must wear it for Davey's sake and mine. The same remark applies to your watch, Mrs. Wallace."

"But it is so much too good for the likes of me," remonstrated that lady in a rapture.

"I am sorry to contradict you for about the hundredth time since we've been shut up together," observed Mr. Aird drily; "but nothing is too good for either of you."

"Oh, I wish I could get out to show it my husband," exclaimed Mrs. Wallace.

"And I to show my locket to papa," cried Ella.

"From what Cooper said yesterday," observed Mr. Aird, "I think our prison doors will be opened to-morrow. By-the-by, what's that under the door?"

The morning letters now arrived in that fashion as all other correspondence from without; but this was not like an ordinary letter. It was much larger, though very thin, and it was directed to Miss Josceline.

"No more lockets, surely?" exclaimed Mrs. Wallace, laughing.

It was not; but it was something that gave Ella even a greater pleasure than the locket had given her. It was a proof of her illustration to Vernon's poem of the "Italian Boy," and of course gave indisputable evidence that the picture had been accepted by the *Mayfair Keepsake*.

To all young people—and for that matter to old ones also—there are few joys to be compared with that of seeing their own effusions for the first time in print; and as with the writer so with the artist, and (what is curious) especially with the indifferent artist. A poem looks ever so much better of course in print than in MS., but it is not to be compared with the improvement that takes place in a picture indifferently executed, which has been through the hands of the wood engraver. The skilled draughtsman complains, and often with justice, that his work suffers grievously from subsequent manipulation after it has left his hands; but with the novice the reverse is the case. A good engraver will supply defects, if he does not absolutely improve upon the original. At all events, whether from that cause, or from the modest opinion of her own performance, Ella thought much more highly of her Italian Boy in his new shape than in his old one. To her, moreover, it meant a great deal more than the mere gratification of a pardonable vanity; it gave her material hope; it was, or so it seemed to her, the first round of the ladder which might lead her in after-years, not to competence indeed (for her views were very humble), but to self-support. If such things were worth printing, she supposed that they must needs be worth paying for—however small might be the honorarium, it would be something; and she felt that she could do a good many such drawings without much injury to her brain-tissue. Besides the picture, there had come the poem which it illustrated, which she read with great approbation, and with such interest and attention that when she had read it a second time she found she had got it by heart. It was because she admired it so—and much more, however incredible it may seem, than her own illustration—

that she could not help showing them both to Mrs. Wallace, who fell into raptures about the wrong one. She thought the picture "so pretty," and Ella a perfect miracle of intelligence for having drawn it: as to the poem, she frankly confessed herself no judge of such things, but had always heard Mr. Vernon was very clever. Directly she had spoken, Ella regretted having been so confidential; the word "clever," so far from being the right term to use, sounded somehow almost depreciating; and it also struck her that Mr. Vernon might not relish her having exposed him to such criticism. Moreover, what was still worse, before she could restrain Mrs. Wallace's enthusiasm that lady had summoned Mr. Aird to "come and look at Miss Josceline's beautiful drawing," which covered the poor girl with confusion. It was one thing to have confided her secret to a motherly friend of her own sex, and quite another to share it with Mr. Aird.

"Poems are not much in my way," said that gentleman with his usual frankness, "but the picture is charming; I had no idea you were an artist, Miss Ella."

"Nor I either," replied she with an uncomfortable laugh; "Mrs. Wallace ought not to have shown it to you."

"There is nothing to be ashamed of, I am sure," said Mr. Aird good-naturedly, but also with a certain gravity which did not escape her. "Are you in the habit of illustrating Mr. Vernon's poems?"

"I have never done but this one. How could it be otherwise?" inquired Ella simply, but with a blush that would rise to her cheek in spite of all her efforts.

"To be sure; you've only known him a few days, have you?" was the quiet reply. "The proof-sheet is damp, I see; he has lost no time in sending you what he knew would give you pleasure."

"I don't know whether he sent it, or Mr. Felspar," said Ella; "they were both very kind about my little drawing—I mean about helping me to get it published."

"It is Mr. Vernon's handwriting," remarked Mr. Aird drily, "so it is probable it was he who sent it."

Then Mrs. Wallace burst out laughing.

"Why do you laugh?" inquired Ella, feeling almost angry with that excellent lady, though she could not have explained, even to herself, why she should be so.

"Mrs. Wallace laughs," said Mr. Aird, "because she thinks you had not much doubt in your own mind as to which of those young gentlemen sent the picture. But you see I am not so rude. I am as grave as a judge, which, indeed, I was at one time. But there is Dr. Cooper. Will he let us out of prison to-day or not, I wonder?"

Ella esteemed the good doctor greatly, but his arrival had never been so welcome to her as it was at that particular moment. She was not one of those young ladies who rather like being rallied about a young gentleman's attentions to them than otherwise, but the question presented

itself even to her (and added to her embarrassment), Would she have taken it to heart so much, if her heart had not been concerned in the matter?

It fortunately happened that she had at once something else to think of, for the Doctor's verdict was that the child was convalescent, and that all danger might now be considered over, whether as regarded himself or others, and in a few minutes Ella was clasped in her father's arms.

"You are not looking well, papa?" were her first anxious words.

"I am quite well, darling," was his reply; "though perhaps 'none the better,' as the schoolboys say, 'for seeing you.' Extreme joy, you know, has sometimes the same effect as sorrow. Now tell me how you have fared in your prison-house?"

There was not much to tell him that had not been already told in her daily bulletins, save what had occurred that very morning.

"Dear papa, I hope—indeed I am *sure* you will be pleased to hear that my little picture has been accepted by the magazine. And only see how much better it looks in print."

"It does, my dear," he answered quietly; "but I have seen it already. Mr. Vernon was so good as to bring a duplicate of it for me when he brought yours."

"Did he come himself, then? That was very kind of him," said Ella impulsively: the next moment the recollection of Mrs. Wallace's badinage occurred to her, and she turned crimson.

"Yes," said Mr. Josceline, keeping his eyes fixed on her face, which increased her confusion, "he came in person, and we had some conversation together. He is an estimable young man for his station in life, no doubt, but seems to entertain peculiar opinions."

"He is very well-meaning, I think," said Ella, rather inappositely.

Mr. Vernon had been kind to her, and she felt bound to say what she could for him; and the tone in which her father had spoken of him had been sufficiently severe and curt.

"No doubt," he replied; "I don't wish to imply that his opinions are bad or vicious, but only that they are not the views entertained by persons of our class. They are what I suppose would be termed Bohemian, which it is only natural they should be. He is not quite the sort of man I should wish a son of mine—and still less a daughter—to be familiar with."

"I am very sorry," said Ella simply.

"Why should you be sorry, my dear? It is not likely that you and he will again be thrown together even so casually as has happened here. Your paths in life will necessarily be far apart. You must thank him, of course, though, from what he said to me, I gather that you are at least equally indebted in the matter to Mr. Felspar for the service he has done you—since you seem to consider it of some importance—and there will be an end of it."

"Very well, papa."

There was no despair in her tone, such as he almost feared there

would be, but there was genuine disappointment. She would like to have drawn more pictures for the *Keepsake*, and to have illustrated more poems of Mr. Vernon's. This partnership in art and letters had a certain inexplicable charm for her.

"What is that you have in your hand, my darling?" inquired Mr. Josceline, after a long and somewhat uncomfortable pause. "The case looks promising, as if it came from a jeweller's shop."

"Oh, the locket!" But a few minutes ago she had pictured to herself the pleasure with which she should show Mr. Aird's present to her father, but now all that seemed to have faded away; the matter had become almost indifferent to her.

"What locket? Dear me, who could have given you this?" He had opened the case, and was regarding the splendid gift with admiration. "It must have been some very generous person."

"It was, papa. Mr. Aird sent for it from London by way of thanks, as I suppose, for my nursing little Davey, which I am sure I should have been glad to do at all events. It is altogether too rich a guerdon for so slight a service."

"It is very handsome, certainly, my dear; but you must not under-rate your own deserts. It is very natural that a man of generous nature like Mr. Aird, should have endeavoured to show himself sensible of them."

"But is it not very costly? I know nothing about such things, but if these are real diamonds——"

"Well, I don't think it's very likely, Ella," put in Mr. Josceline, smiling, "that Mr. Aird would have given you paste. If I am not mistaken, this did not cost less than eighty guineas."

"Eighty guineas! Oh, papa! And he has given Mrs. Wallace a gold watch and chain."

"Indeed! Well, doubtless to a man of Mr. Aird's fortune such things are but flea-bites; still it is very creditable to him. He must (as I always suspected) have a noble nature. May I look inside, my dear?"

"Inside the locket? Of course, papa. Why do you ask such a question?" inquired Ella, in unaffected surprise.

"Well, I didn't know," he answered with a smile of significance. "These little cadeaux are sometimes of a private nature. They sometimes contain a portrait of the donor, for example. However, this is empty, I see, at present."

"Yes. By-the-by, Mr. Aird was so good as to promise, papa, that he would get me a photograph of little Davey to put in it; and then, as I said to him, the other side I shall devote to one of yourself."

"I think you should not have said that, Ella," said Mr. Josceline gravely; "it was hardly gracious. You might have asked Mr. Aird for his own picture. However, it is very gratifying—very." He drew his daughter towards him and kissed her tenderly.

"Why do you sigh, dear papa?" said Ella, alarmed by the expression of her father's face even more than by that evidence of emotion. "I am sure you are not well."

"Yes, darling; I am well enough, as well as I ever shall be, that is, the least thing that excites me ——" and Mr. Josceline fell back in his chair with a groan of pain.

Ella flew to the bell, and then to her father's side. "Esther, tell Dr. Cooper to come to papa directly. He has not left the house, I think, but if he has, send for him *at once*."

Ella was frightened, but she was not one of those whom alarm deprives of their presence of mind.

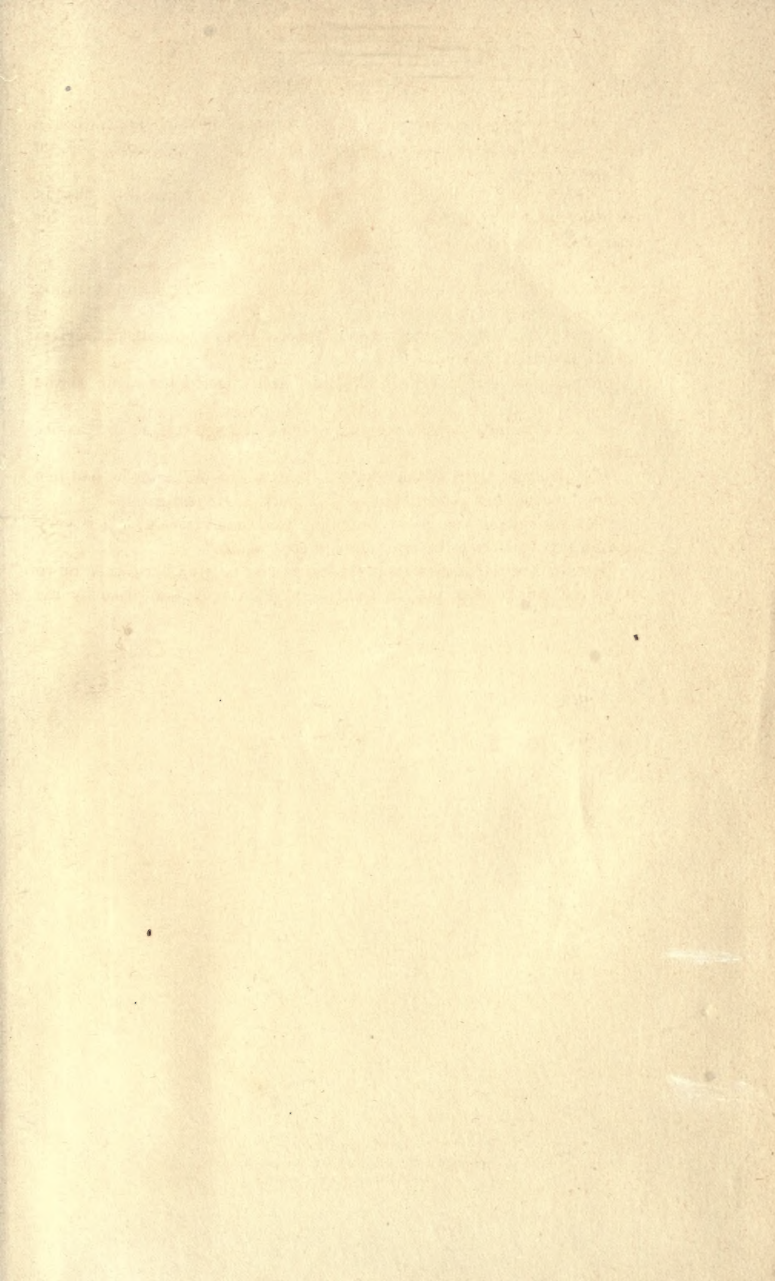
She unloosed her father's neckerchief and wheeled his chair to the window.

In a few minutes, which seemed, however, an age to her, Dr. Cooper arrived.

"Oh, Doctor, what is the matter?" she whispered, after he had felt the now unconscious patient's pulse and made his investigations.

"My poor child, you must bear up," said he evasively; "it is very hard for you to have to be sick nurse so soon again."

Then two of the hotel servants came in and carried her father up to his room, and he was put to bed. And Ella took her place by his pillow.



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